Voice Search

The Definitive Guide

Voice search is HUGE right now.

And it's only getting bigger.

The question is:

How do you optimize your site for voice search?

Well, that's exactly what you're going to learn in this guide.

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Chapter 1

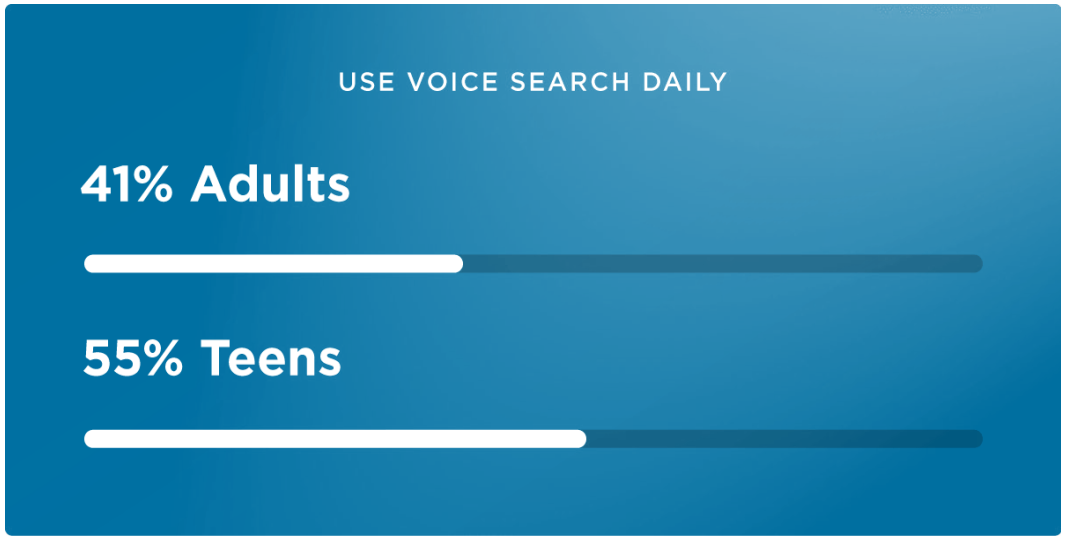
The Voice Search Revolution

Some people say that we're in the middle of a "Voice Search Revolution".

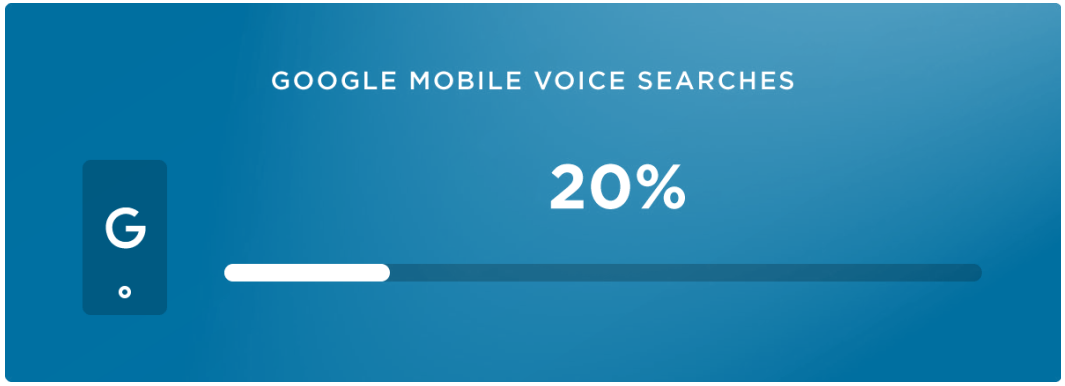
Is that true... or an exaggeration?

Let's look at some recent stats...

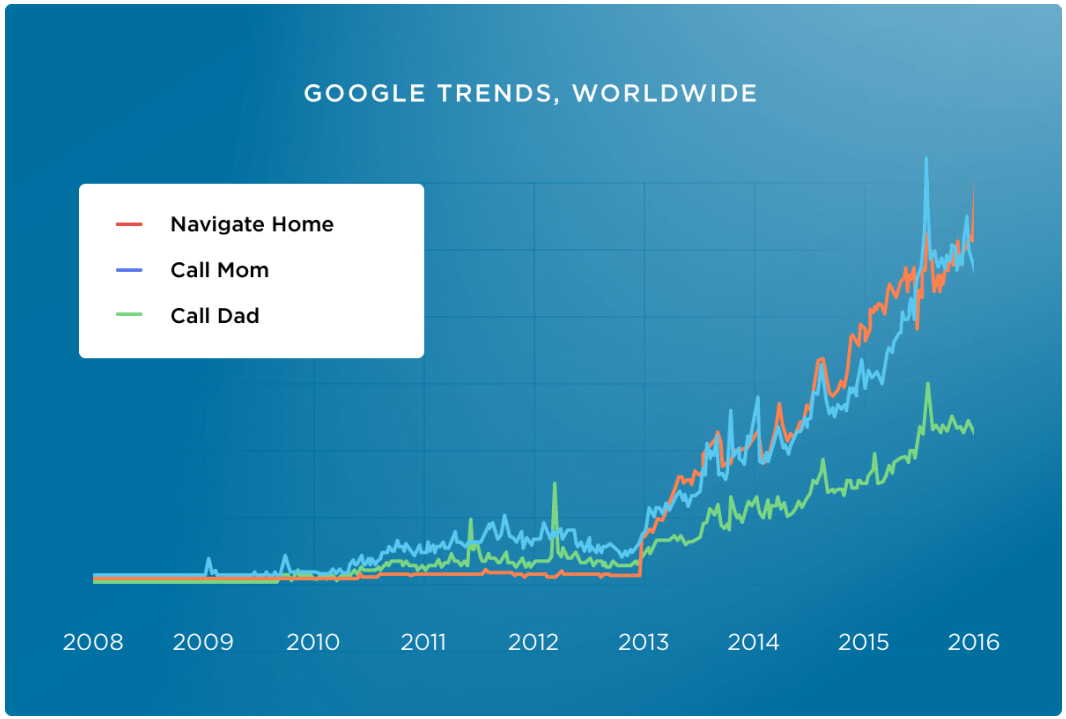
41% of adults (and 55% of teens) use voice search daily (Google).



20% of all Google mobile queries are voice searches (Google).



Voice search has grown 35x since 2008 (KCBP).

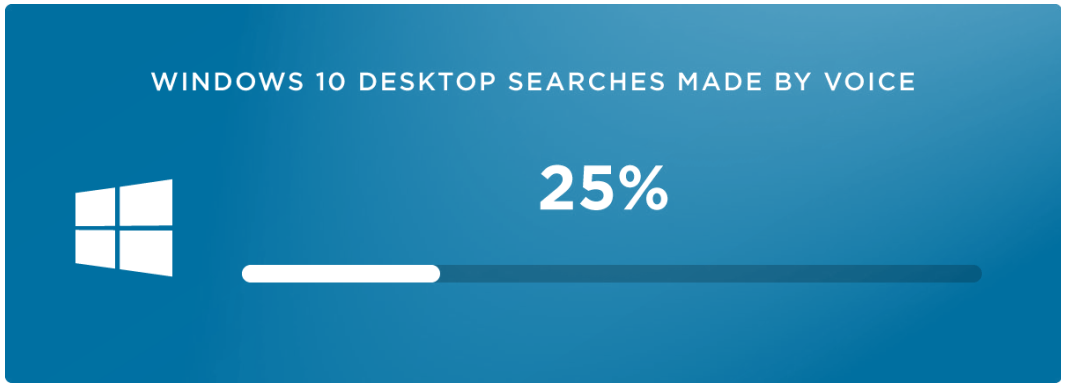


The stats paint a clear picture:

Voice search isn't "the next big thing". It's already here.

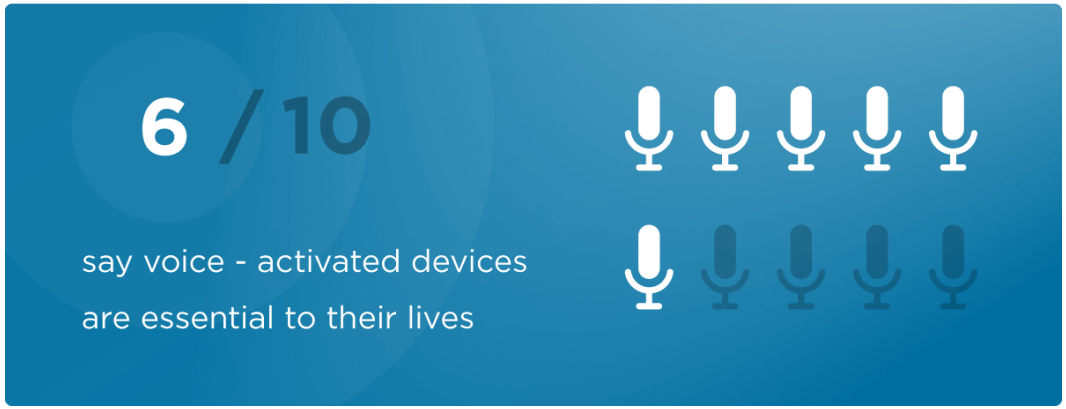
And when you dig deeper, things get even more interesting...

25% of all Windows 10 desktop searches are done via voice (Branded3).



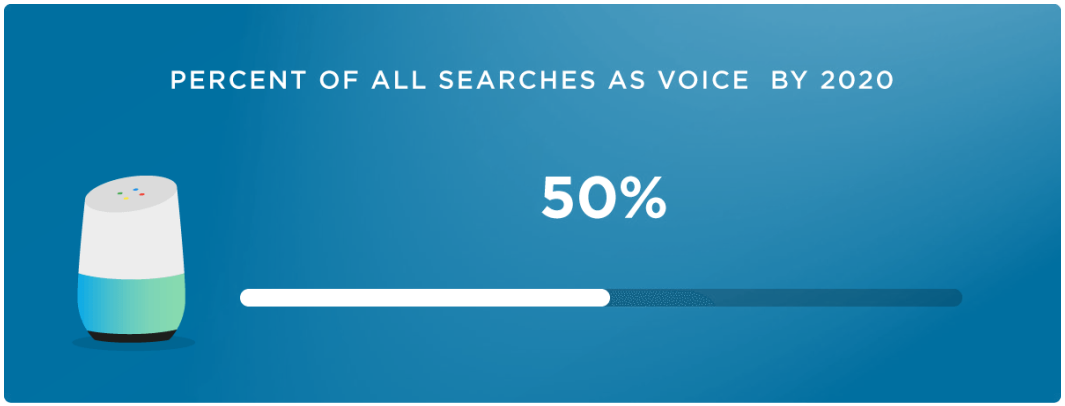
This stat surprised me. Contrary to popular belief, voice search isn't just for mobile devices. More people are talking to their desktop computers and smart speakers. Speaking of...

65% of Google Home or Amazon echo owners "can't imagine going back" (Geomarketing).



Smart speakers are the next refrigerator –every home will have one. And as more people search with smart speakers, SEOs will need to adapt (more on that in Chapter 3).

By 2020 50% of all searches will be voice searches (Comscore).



Who knows if this prediction will turn out to be true. Either way, it's clear that voice searches are eating into keyboard-based searches.

And as you'll soon see, this trend impacts how we optimize content for SEO.

Now, you might be wondering:

Why is voice search growing so quickly?

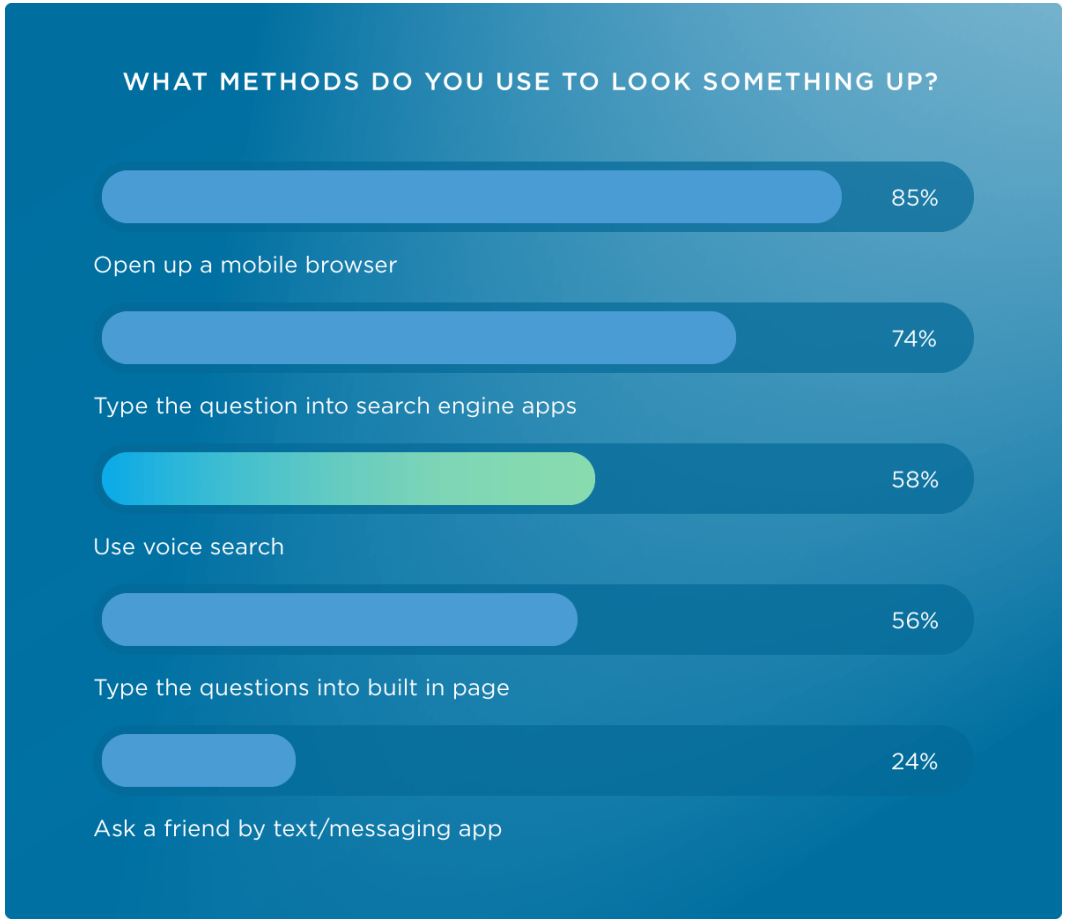
There are 3 main drivers behind this trend...

First, searching with your voice is 3.7x faster than typing (Bing).

Faster searches=faster answers.

So it's no surprise that more people are using their voice instead of a keyboard.

Second, voice is perfect for mobile searches. In fact, nearly 60% of mobile searchers use voice search at least “some of the time” (Stone Temple).



Finally, voice search is more convenient. That's probably why more than half of respondents in one survey stated they use voice search so they "don't have to type" (Stone Temple).

Typing "how tall is the tallest building in the world" on an iPhone is a huge pain. But saying the same phrase out loud is an absolute breeze.

To Summarize:

It's clear that voice search isn't just hype. It's a legit trend.

And it's a trend that's already affecting SEO.

Chapter 2

SEO in a Voice Search World

As it turns out, searching with your voice is very different than typing. Specifically, voice search changes:

- How people search.
- When people search.
- And what they search for.

In this chapter I'll breakdown these changes... and how they impact SEO.

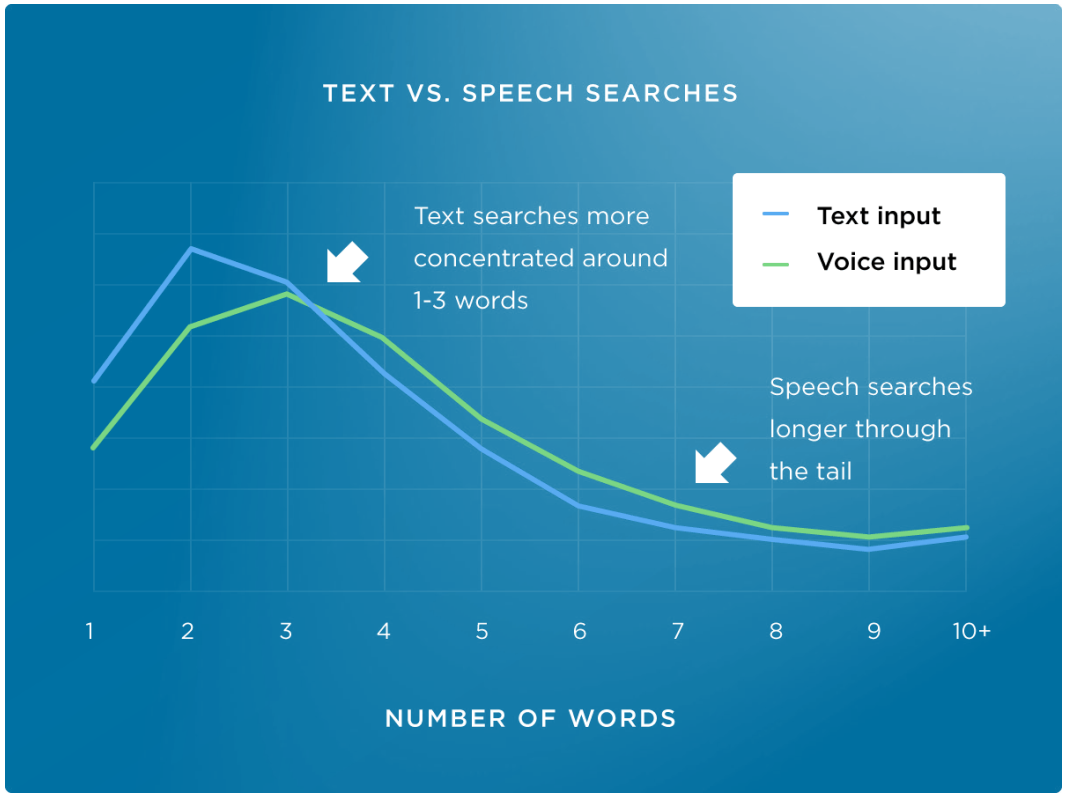
#1: Voice Changes How People Search

Voice search changes how people search in two important ways:

1. Searches are longer
2. Searches are more conversational

I'll explain...

Bing engineers noticed that voice search keywords are significantly longer than text-based searches.



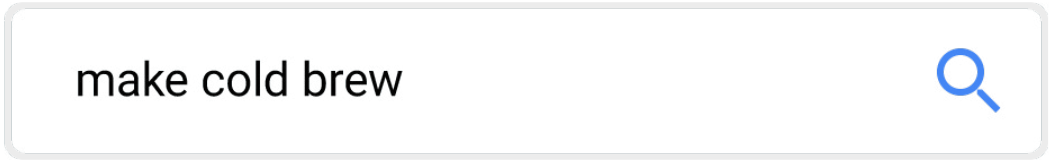
And voice searches aren't just longer... they're less like "computer language".

In other words: they're more conversational.

In fact, Google states that 70% of searches on Google Assistant use "natural language".

For example, let's say you want to start making cold brew coffee at home.

A few years back, you'd probably type a short keyword like "make cold brew" into Google.



But when you search for the same thing with your voice, your query will be totally different.

Specifically, your search term will be longer. You'll also use natural, human language.

> Hey Google, how do you make cold brew coffee at home?

Needless to say, this has a big impact on how we do keyword research and on-page SEO.

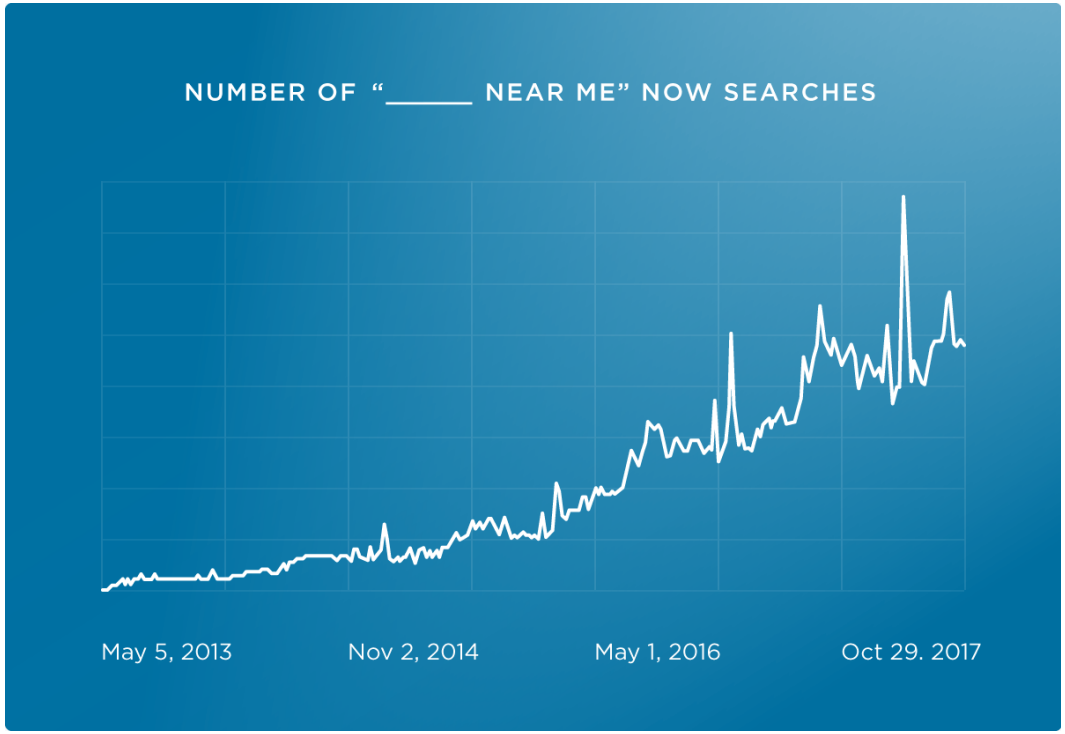
I'll show you how to adapt to this change in Chapters 3 and 4.

But for now, let's look at the second way voice search is changing SEO...

#2: Voice Changes Where People Search

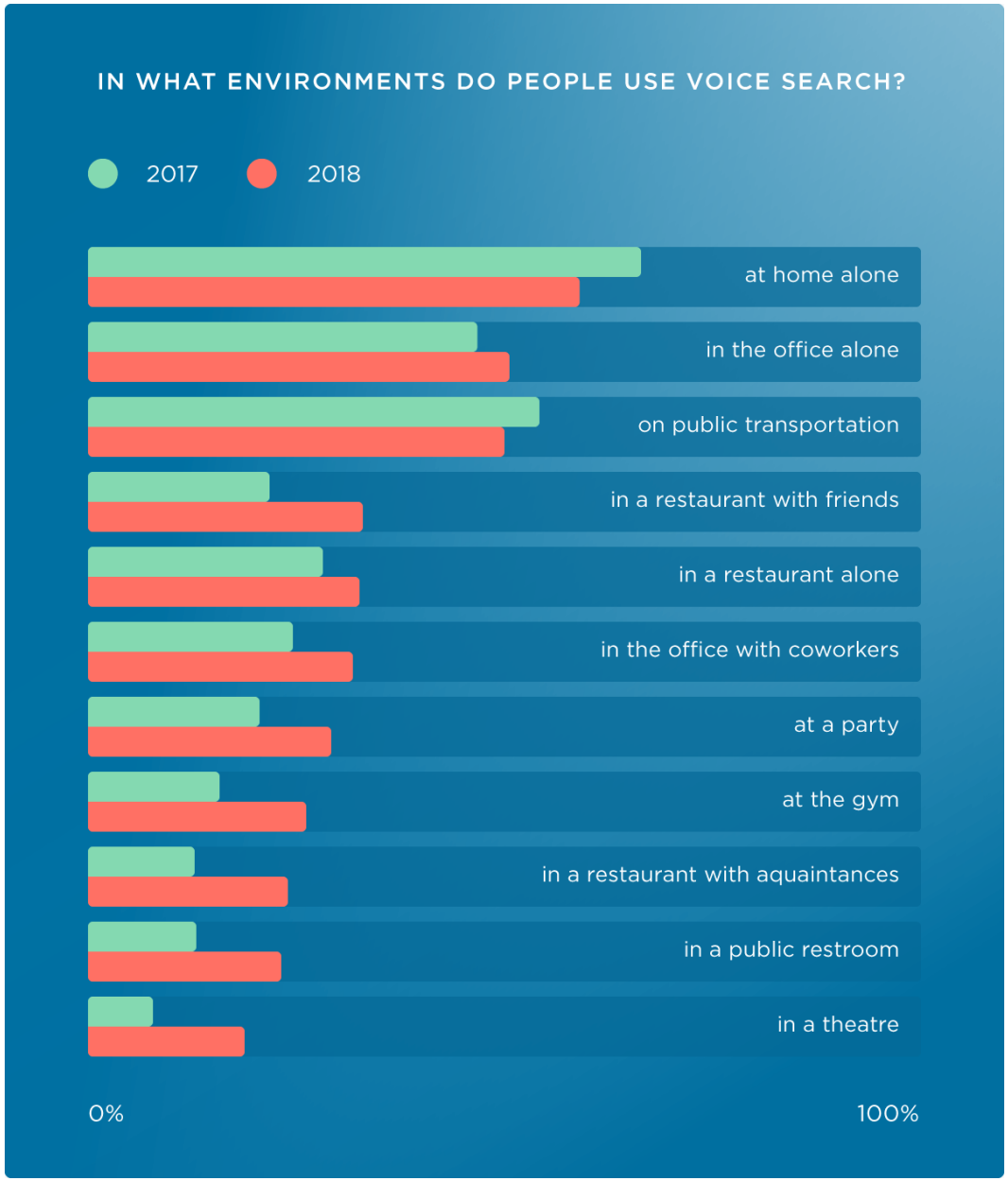
Because voice search is so convenient, it's being used more often and in more places than ever before.

In fact, Google reports that "____ near me now" searches have grown by 150% over the last two years.



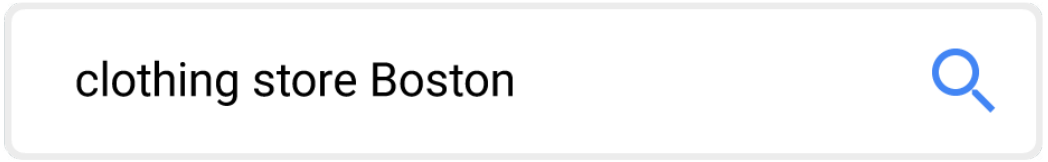
And these searches are happening in places that you might not expect...

One survey found that people are significantly more likely to use voice search in public places (like a restaurant, at the gym...and even in a public bathroom) compared to last year.



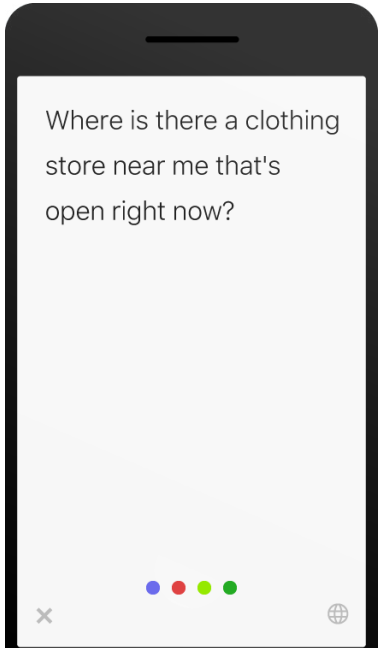
For example... Let's say you're visiting Boston for a big meeting. And on the way to your meeting, you spill coffee on your shirt.

A few years ago, you'd head to the closest place with Wi-Fi, whip out your phone and type "clothing store Boston" into Google.



But thanks to LTE, location technology, and voice search, you'll do a voice search wherever you happen to be.

(And like I outlined earlier, the keyword you use will be very different than if you typed it out).

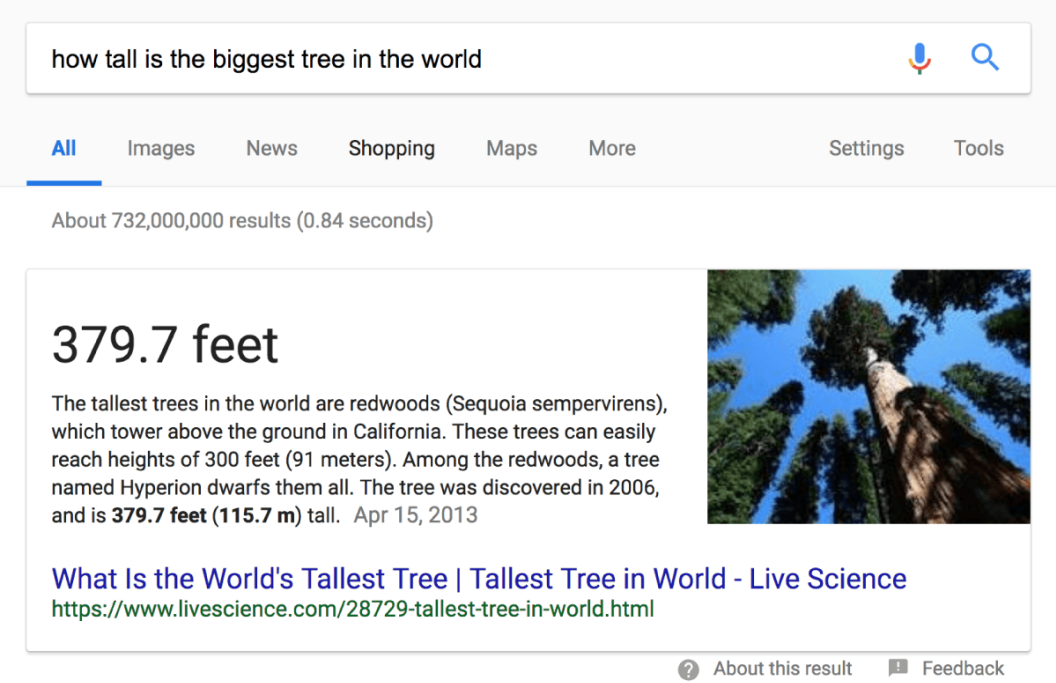


#3: Voice Changes How People Get Search Results

Google is slowly changing from a search engine to an “answer engine”.

In fact, thanks to SERP features like Knowledge Graph and Featured Snippets, the number of organic clicks have dropped by 37%.

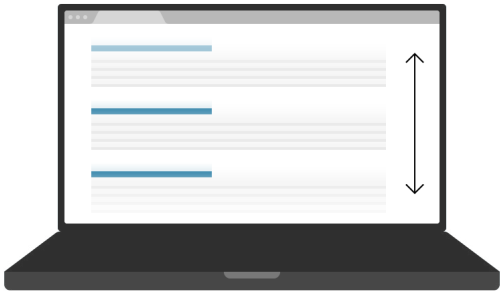
Why? You don’t need to visit a site to get your answer. It’s right there in the search results.


how tall is the biggest tree in the world
All
Images
News
Shopping
Maps
More
Settings
Tools
About 732,000,000 results (0.84 seconds)
379.7 feet
The tallest trees in the world are redwoods (Sequoia sempervirens), which tower above the ground in California. These trees can easily reach heights of 300 feet (91 meters). Among the redwoods, a tree named Hyperion dwarfs them all. The tree was discovered in 2006, and is 379.7 feet (115.7 m) tall. Apr 15, 2013
What Is the World's Tallest Tree | Tallest Tree in World - Live Science
https://www.livescience.com/28729-tallest-tree-in-world.html
About this result
Feedback

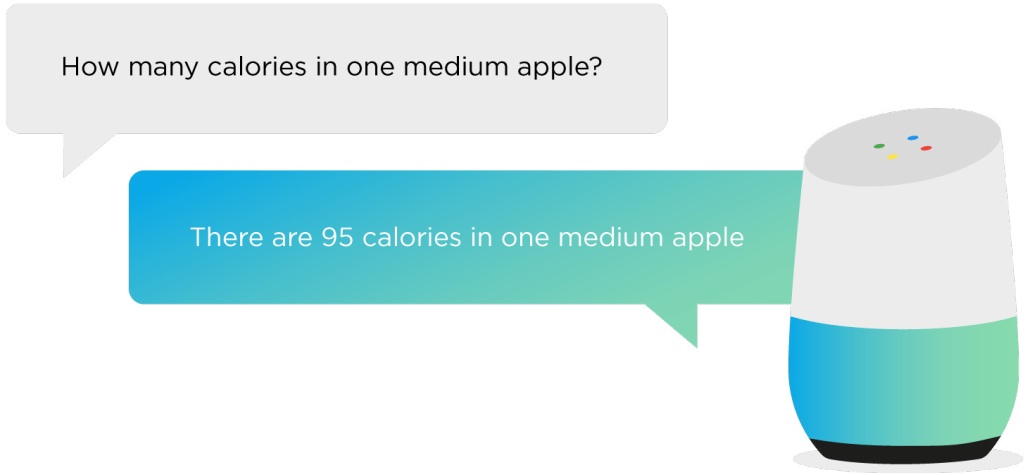
And Google is using this same answer-focused technology to provide voice search results.

For example, let's say you wanted to know how many calories are in an apple.

Back in the day, you'd search for something like "apple calories"... and be forced to sift through 10 different results.

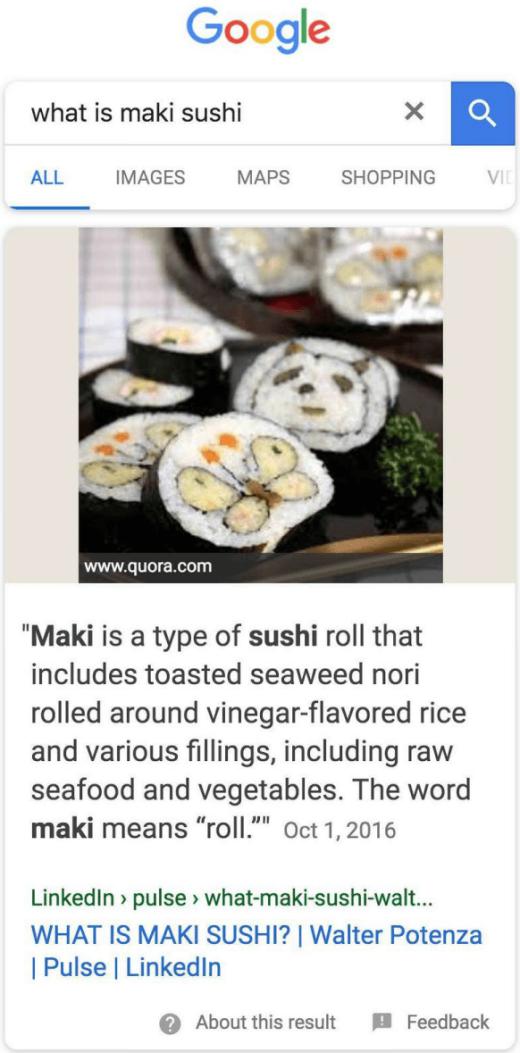


But with voice search, you can get your answer read back to you within seconds.



Sure, lots of voice searches are done on the Google app (or by "typing" with your voice on your phone).

Which means that you still get a traditional set of 10 blue links.


Google
what is maki sushi
ALL
IMAGES
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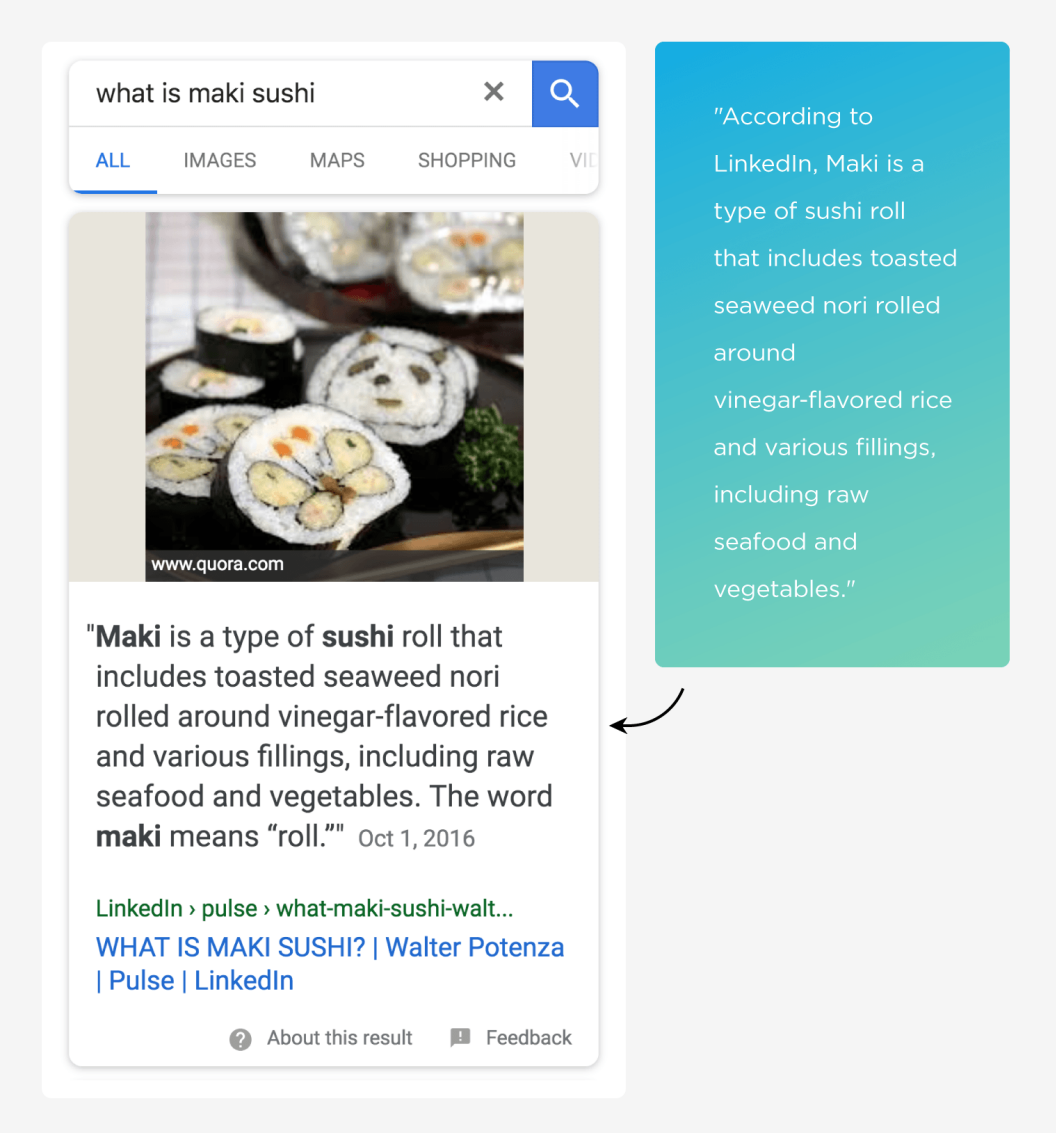
www.quora.com
"Maki is a type of sushi roll that includes toasted seaweed nori rolled around vinegar-flavored rice and various fillings, including raw seafood and vegetables. The word maki means "roll."" Oct 1, 2016
LinkedIn › pulse › what-maki-sushi-walt...
WHAT IS MAKI SUSHI? | Walter Potenza | Pulse | LinkedIn
About this result
Feedback

But this is becoming less and less common.

In fact, even when you get 10 blue links from a voice search, Google usually reads the Featured Snippet back to you.


what is maki sushi
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"Maki is a type of sushi roll that includes toasted seaweed nori rolled around vinegar-flavored rice and various fillings, including raw seafood and vegetables. The word maki means “roll.”" Oct 1, 2016
LinkedIn › pulse › what-maki-sushi-walt...
WHAT IS MAKI SUSHI? | Walter Potenza | Pulse | LinkedIn
About this result
Feedback
"According to LinkedIn, Maki is a type of sushi roll that includes toasted seaweed nori rolled around vinegar-flavored rice and various fillings, including raw seafood and vegetables."

So: what does this mean for SEO and content creators?

Our content needs to give people direct answers to their questions. Otherwise, it's going to be harder and harder to get your content in front of people. That said, don't stress. I'll show you exactly how to create voice-optimized content in chapters 4 and 5.

But first, it's time for me to show you how to do voice search-focused keyword research.

Chapter 3

Voice Keyword Research

In this chapter I'm going to show you how to do keyword research in a voice search world.

Specifically, I'm going to give you three actionable strategies that you can use to find voice search keywords.

Let's dive right in.

Look For "Natural Language" Keywords

Like I mentioned in chapter 2, voice searches are more natural and conversational than text-based searches.

So robotic keywords like this...

paleo | diet | athlete

...are slowly getting replaced with keywords like this:

how do you follow the paleo diet if you're an athlete

And when you evaluate keywords in 2018, you need to keep this fact in mind.

For example, let's take this set of results from the Google Keyword Planner:

Keyword ideas paleo diet DOWNLOAD KEYWORD IDEAS

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Ad impression share	Top of page bid (low range)	Top of page bid (high range)
paleo diet	100K – 1M	Medium	–	$0.06	$0.47
paleo	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.08	$8.63
paleo recipes	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.43	$3.46
paleo diet plan	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$0.11	$1.46
paleo diet foods	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$0.07	$0.93
the paleo diet	1K – 10K	Medium	–	$0.08	$0.63
paleo foods	1K – 10K	High	–	$0.60	$3.50
paleo cookbook	1K – 10K	High	–	$0.49	$3.00
paleo diet food list	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.05	$0.86
paleo diet recipes	10K – 100K	Medium	–	$0.35	$3.46

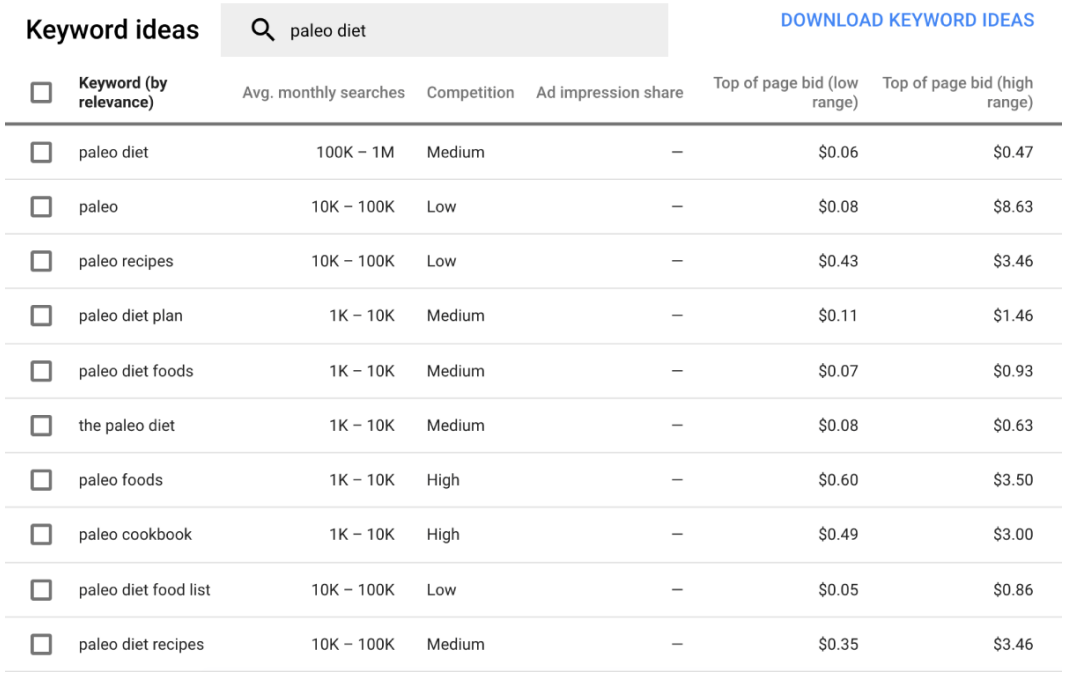
Most people would size up this list of keywords based only on:

- Search volume
- CPC
- Seasonal trends

But thanks to voice search, you ALSO want to check to see if the keyword is conversational.

In other words:
Natural sounding keywords are going to get a big boost in search volume as voice search grows.

(And the opposite is true: if a keyword sounds robotic, expect fewer people to search for that term in the years to come).



Keyword ideas

paleo diet

DOWNLOAD KEYWORD IDEAS

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Ad impression share	Top of page bid (low range)	Top of page bid (high range)
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paleo cookbook	1K – 10K	High	–	$0.49	$3.00
paleo diet food list	10K – 100K	Low	–	$0.05	$0.86
paleo diet recipes	10K – 100K	Medium	–	$0.35	$3.46

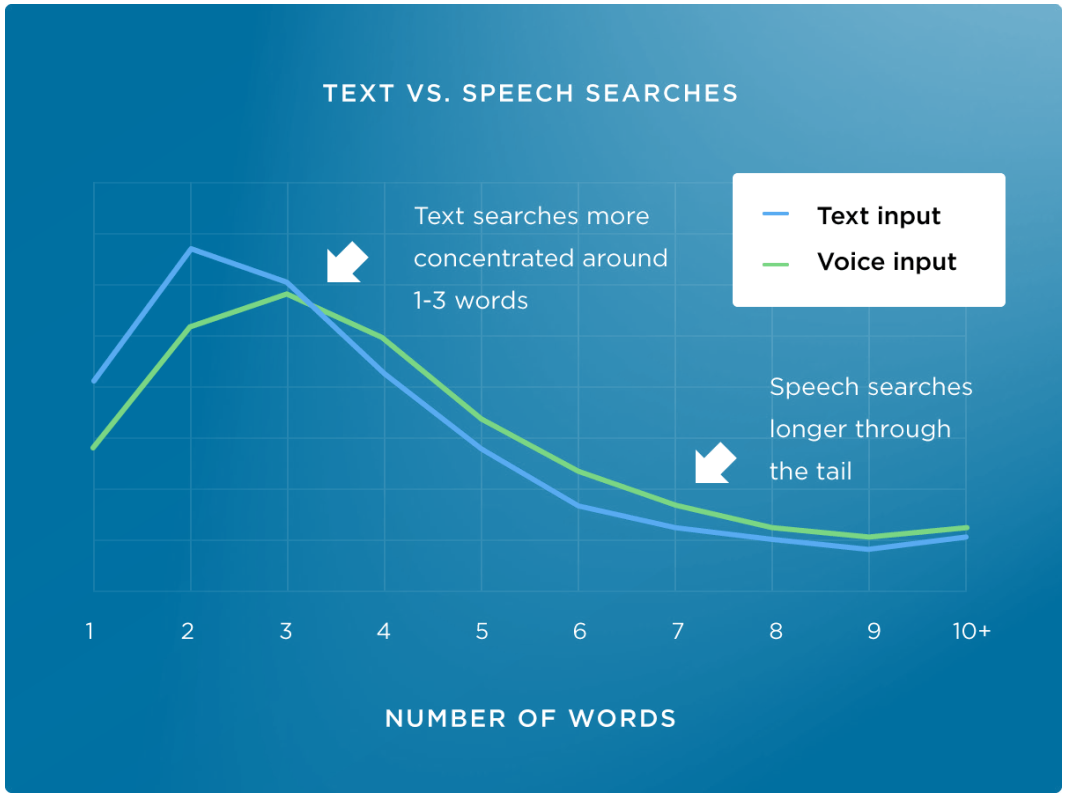
Don’t Avoid Insanely-Long Keywords

Most people completely avoid really long keywords.

Why?

It’s simple: VERY few people search for them.

But as more people search with their voice, “normal” keyword length is getting longer and longer:



So don't be afraid to optimize your content around 5+ word terms, like these:

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition
paleo diet creator	10 – 100	Low
what is a palio	10 – 100	Low
not paleo	10 – 100	Low
paleo list of allowed foods	10 – 100	Low
why is paleo good for you	10 – 100	Low
bad things about paleo diet	10 – 100	Low
are eggs part of the paleo diet	10 – 100	Low
what did the paleo eat	10 – 100	Low
what can t you eat on paleo diet	10 – 100	Low
how long has the paleo diet be...	10 – 100	Low
paleolithic eating	10 – 100	Low
what vegetables are not paleo	10 – 100	Low
paleo what does it mean	10 – 100	Low

Now, to be clear:

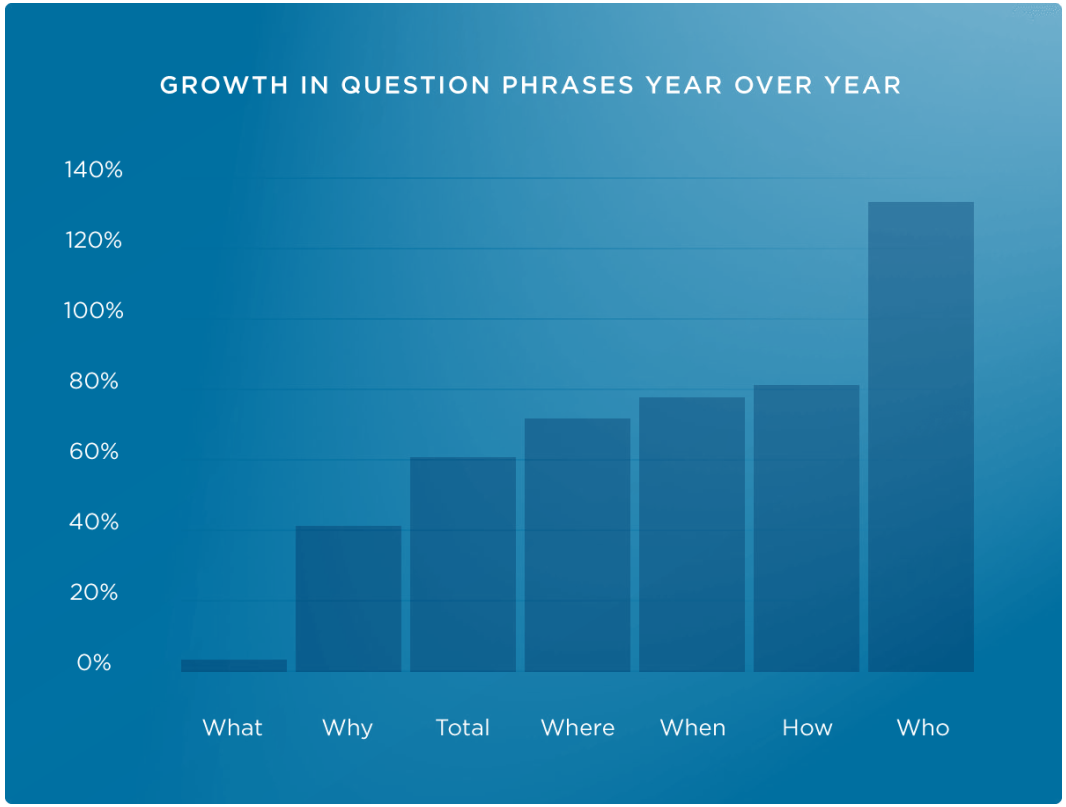
I don't think you should optimize an entire page around really long terms.

Instead, you want to sprinkle these long keywords in your content.

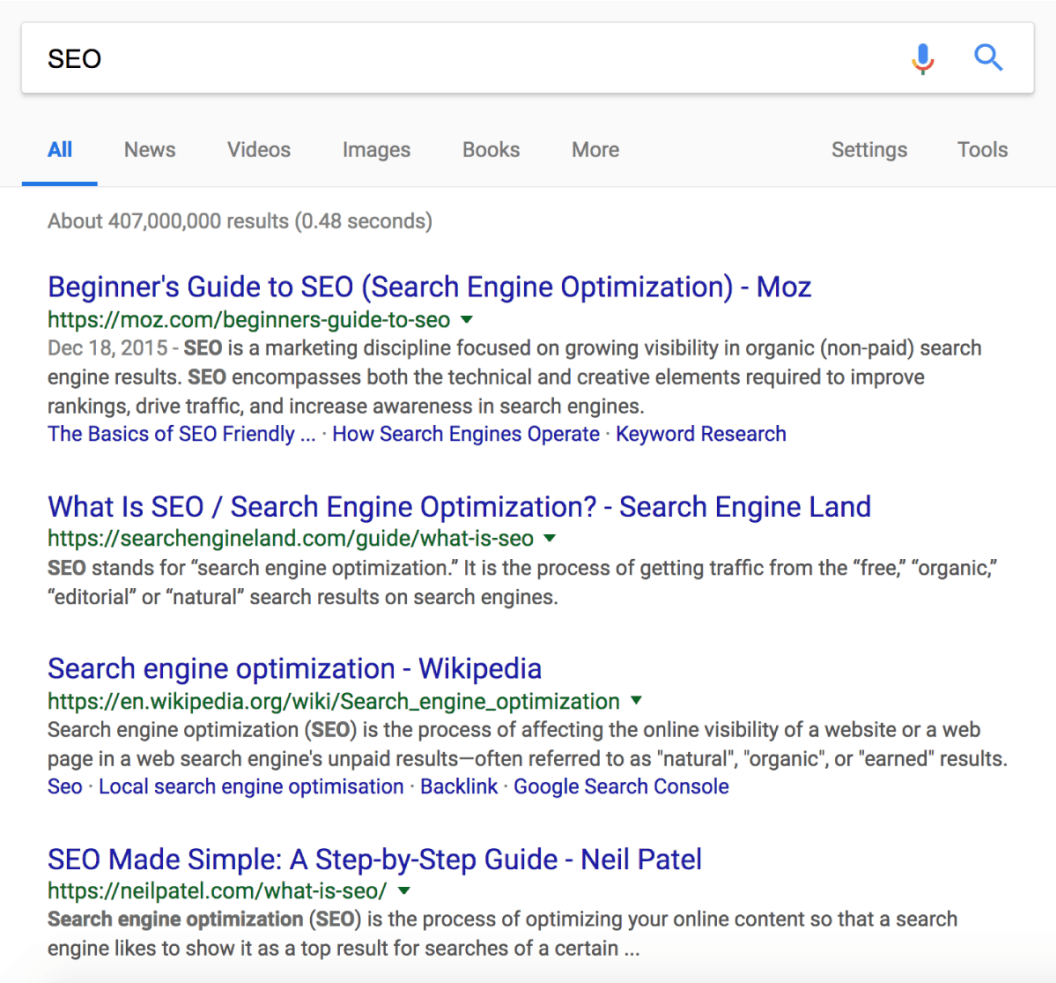
As you'll see in Chapter 4, if Google finds a keyword anywhere in a piece of content, they'll use it as a voice search result.

Target "Question Keywords"

Thanks largely to voice search, question keywords are up 61% year-over-year:



A few years ago, if you wanted to get higher rankings in Google, you might search for something like this:


SEO
All
News
Videos
Images
Books
More
Settings
Tools
About 407,000,000 results (0.48 seconds)
Beginner's Guide to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) - Moz
https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo
Dec 18, 2015 - SEO is a marketing discipline focused on growing visibility in organic (non-paid) search engine results. SEO encompasses both the technical and creative elements required to improve rankings, drive traffic, and increase awareness in search engines.
The Basics of SEO Friendly ... · How Search Engines Operate · Keyword Research
What Is SEO / Search Engine Optimization? - Search Engine Land
https://searchengineland.com/guide/what-is-seo
SEO stands for "search engine optimization." It is the process of getting traffic from the "free," "organic," "editorial" or "natural" search results on search engines.
Search engine optimization - Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization
Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of affecting the online visibility of a website or a web page in a web search engine's unpaid results—often referred to as "natural", "organic", or "earned" results.
Seo · Local search engine optimisation · Backlink · Google Search Console
SEO Made Simple: A Step-by-Step Guide - Neil Patel
https://neilpatel.com/what-is-seo/
Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of optimizing your online content so that a search engine likes to show it as a top result for searches of a certain ...

But you're probably not going to whip out your iPhone and say: "Hey Google...SEO".

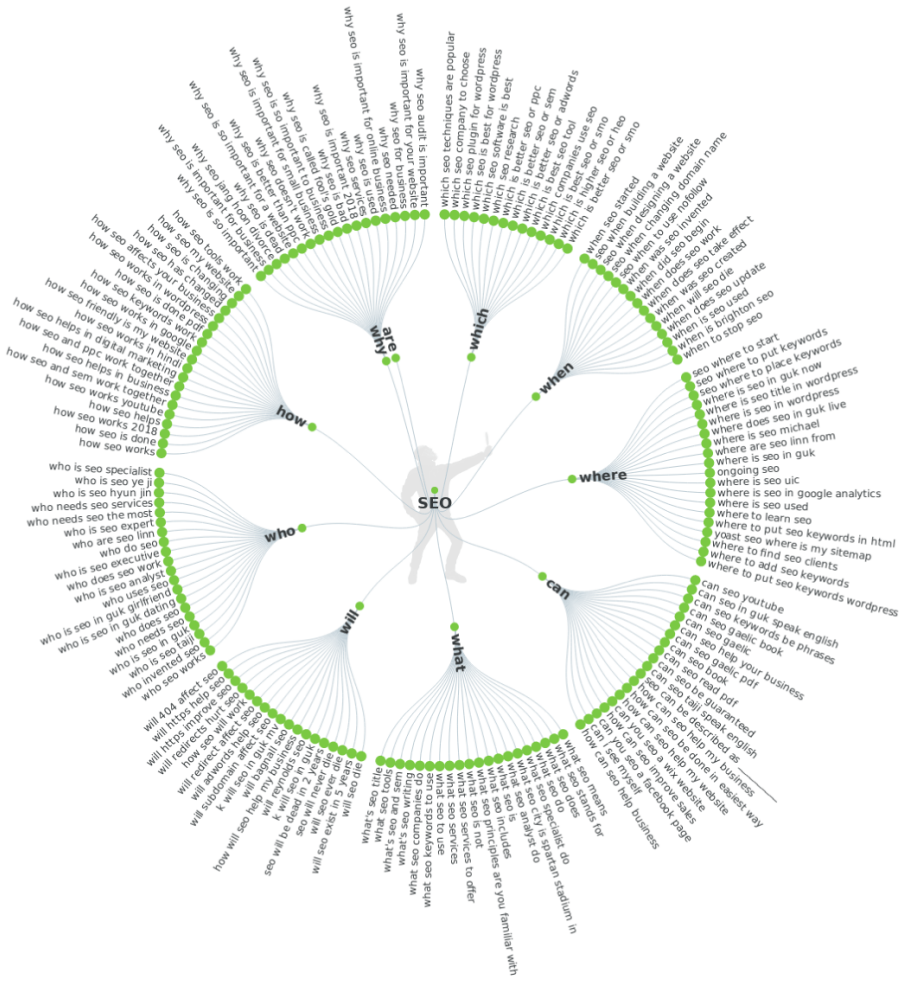
Instead, when you search with your voice, you're going to ask a question.

> How do I get my site to rank higher in Google?

You can already find question keywords in any keyword research tool. But it takes a lot of digging.

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition
paleo shopping list	1K – 10K	Low
free paleo recipes	100 – 1K	Medium
paleo cookies	1K – 10K	High
best paleo diet book	100 – 1K	High
paleo diet for athletes	100 – 1K	Low
what to eat on paleo diet	1K – 10K	Low
paleo plan	100 – 1K	Low
paleo lunch	1K – 10K	Low
paleo breakfast recipes	1K – 10K	Low
paleo cooking	100 – 1K	Medium
paleo diet results	1K – 10K	Low

If you want to scale this process, I recommend **Answer the Public...**


SEO
why
are
which
when
where
can
what
will
who
how
why seo is important for your website
why seo is important for business
why seo is important for online business
why seo services
why seo is important 2018
why seo is important
why seo is gold
why seo is important to business
why seo is important for small business
why seo is so important for small business
why seo is so important for a website
why seo is better than ppc
why seo is important for a website
why seo is important for business
why seo is so important
why seo is important for business
why seo is so important
why seo is cv important
why seo is so important for business
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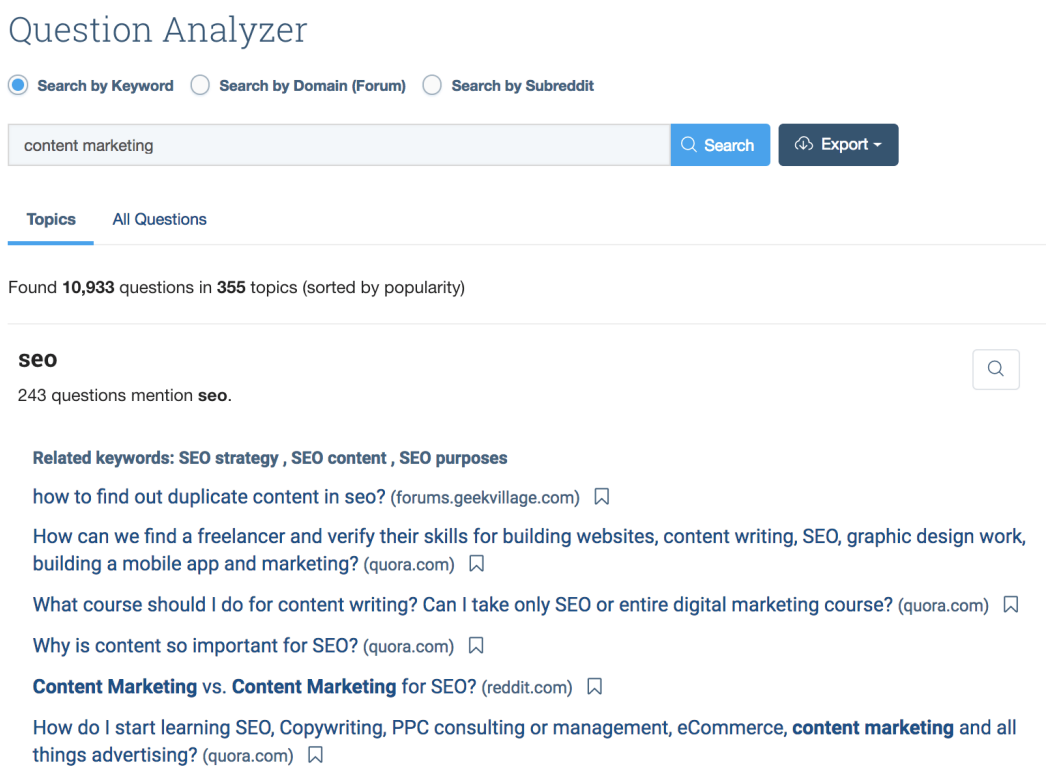
...and BuzzSumo's Question Analyzer:


Question Analyzer
Search by Keyword
Search by Domain (Forum)
Search by Subreddit
content marketing
Search
Export
Topics
All Questions
Found 10,933 questions in 355 topics (sorted by popularity)
seo
243 questions mention seo.
Related keywords: SEO strategy , SEO content , SEO purposes
how to find out duplicate content in seo? (forums.geekvillage.com)
How can we find a freelancer and verify their skills for building websites, content writing, SEO, graphic design work, building a mobile app and marketing? (quora.com)
What course should I do for content writing? Can I take only SEO or entire digital marketing course? (quora.com)
Why is content so important for SEO? (quora.com)
Content Marketing vs. Content Marketing for SEO? (reddit.com)
How do I start learning SEO, Copywriting, PPC consulting or management, eCommerce, content marketing and all things advertising? (quora.com)

Now that you've found a handful of voice search keywords, it's time to optimize your content around them.

Chapter 4

Optimize Content for Voice Search

In this chapter you're going to learn how to optimize your content for voice search.

And I have some great news:

You DON'T need to completely overhaul your site.

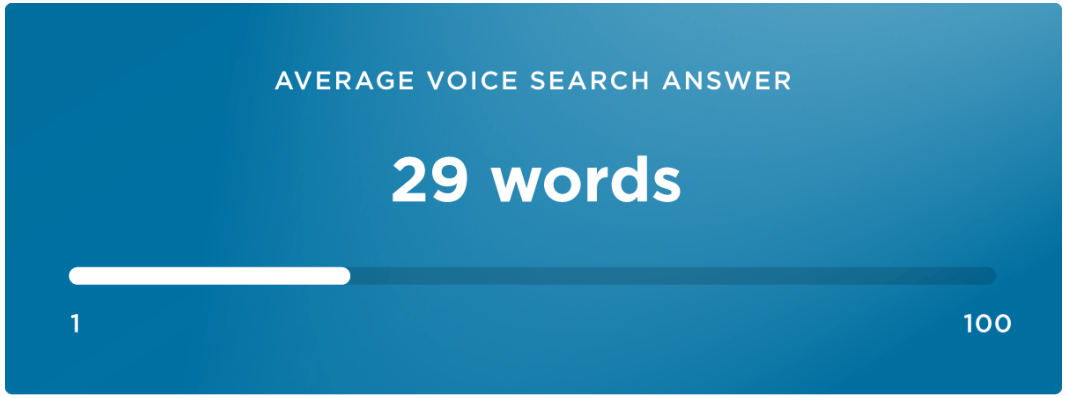
In fact, you can get your site ready for voice search SEO with a few simple tweaks.

Include Short, Concise Answers in Your Content

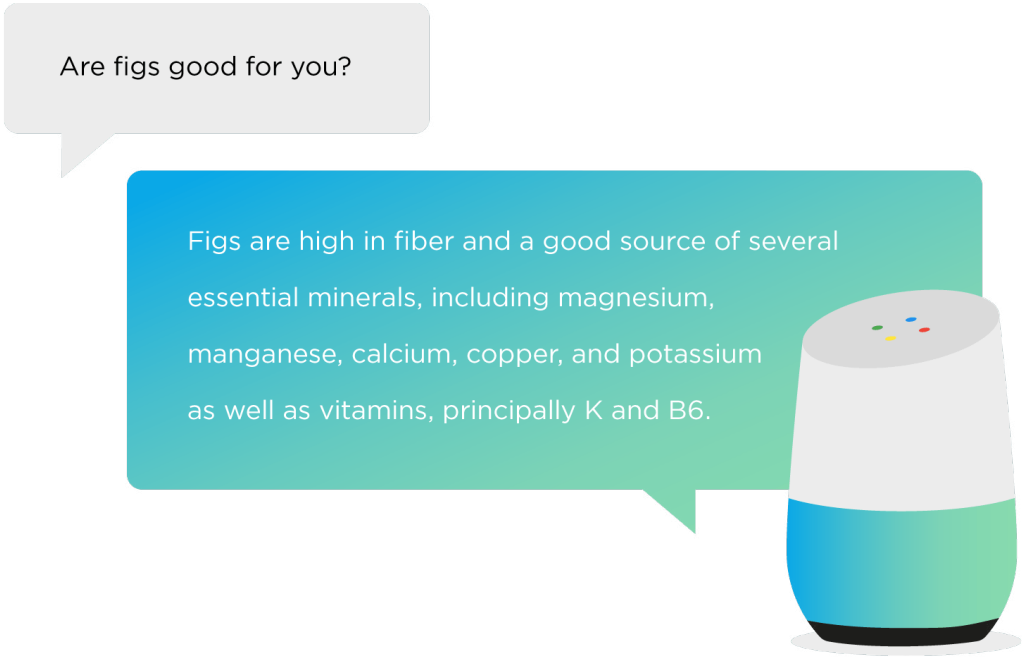
Earlier this year we conducted the largest voice search SEO ranking factors study ever.

BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
4615
shares
We Analyzed 10,000 Google Home Results. Here's What We Learned About Voice Search SEO
by Brian Dean
Last updated Feb. 28, 2018
10,000 Results
Voice Search Ranking Factors Study
We analyzed 10,000 Google Home search results to answer the question:
How do you optimize your site for voice search?

And one of our most interesting findings is that Google tends to answer voice search queries with short, 29-word results:



For example, the Google Home results for the query "are figs good for you" is:


Are figs good for you?
Figs are high in fiber and a good source of several essential minerals, including magnesium, manganese, calcium, copper, and potassium as well as vitamins, principally K and B6.

(That result is 28 words)

That's why it's important that your content answers someone's query in 30 words or less.

That said:

It doesn't make sense to write a 30-word blog post.

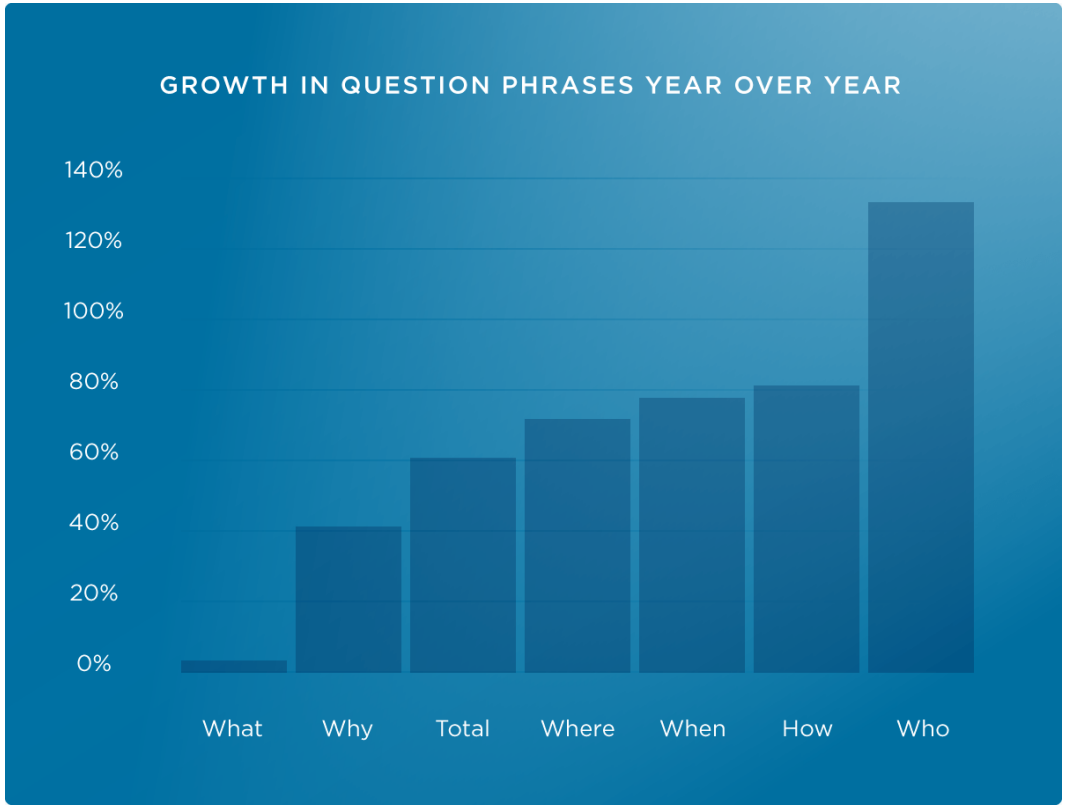
That's why you want to...

Create Voice Search FAQ Pages

FAQ pages are PERFECT for voice search.

Why?

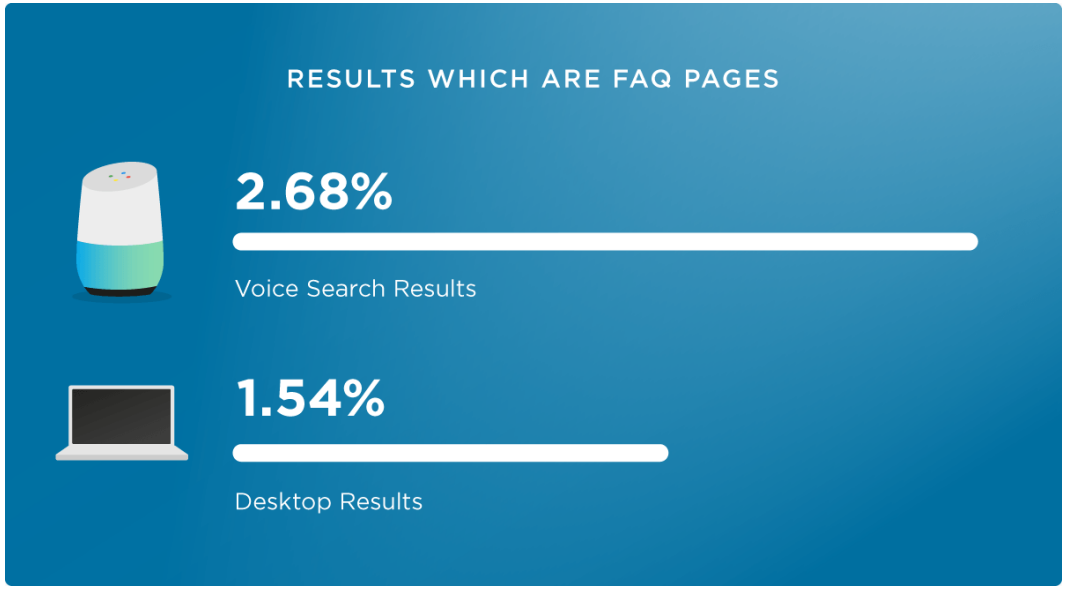
Well, like I mentioned earlier, question keywords are on the rise.



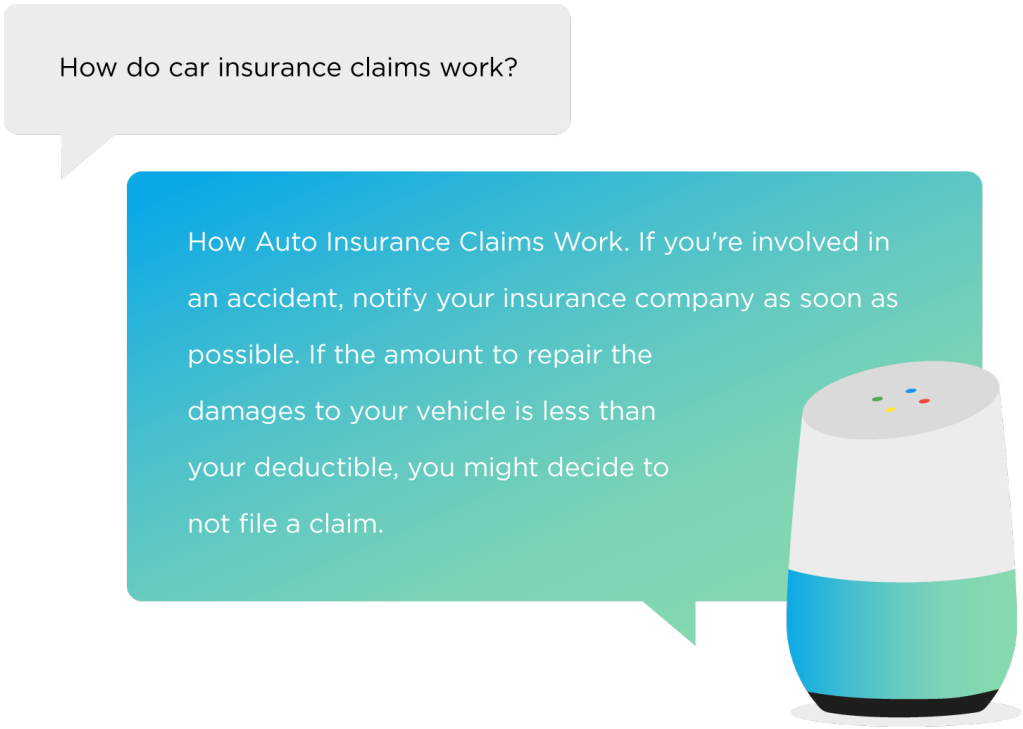
And you just learned that Google wants to give their users 30-ish word answers.

FAQ pages check both of these boxes.

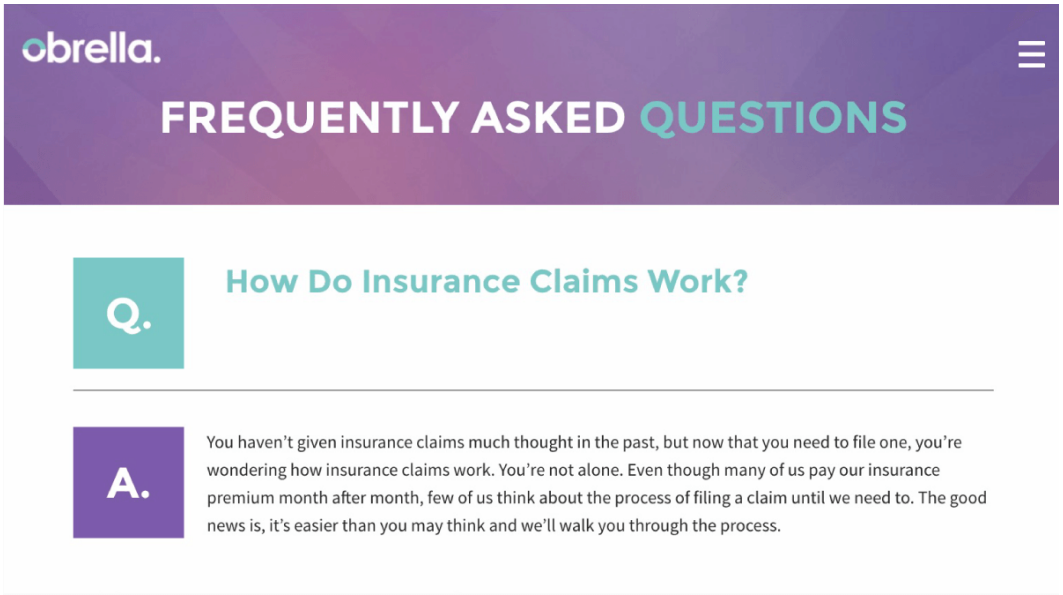
That's probably why voice search results are 1.7x more likely to come from an FAQ page compared to desktop results.



For example, if you do a voice search for “how do car insurance claims work”, here’s what you get back:


How do car insurance claims work?
How Auto Insurance Claims Work. If you're involved in an accident, notify your insurance company as soon as possible. If the amount to repair the damages to your vehicle is less than your deductible, you might decide to not file a claim.

Sure enough, Google pulled that answer from a FAQ page:


obrella.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Q.
How Do Insurance Claims Work?
A.
You haven't given insurance claims much thought in the past, but now that you need to file one, you're wondering how insurance claims work. You're not alone. Even though many of us pay our insurance premium month after month, few of us think about the process of filing a claim until we need to. The good news is, it's easier than you may think and we'll walk you through the process.

And that's just one keyword. FAQ pages can rank for hundreds of different voice search queries.

For example:

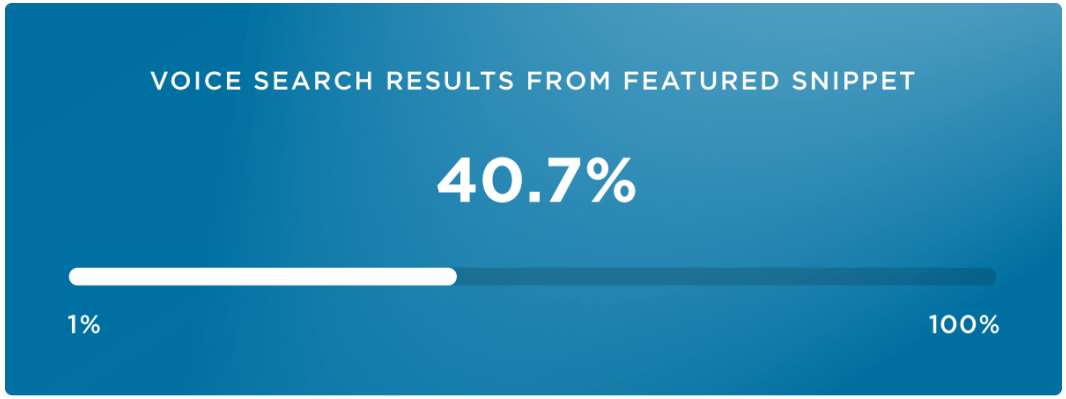
If you do a voice search for "how do home insurance claims work", the result comes from that same FAQ page.

How do home insurance claims work?
After you file a claim with your home insurance provider, an adjuster will usually visit your home and inspect the damage. He or she will decide how much the insurance company will pay toward your claim. Often, you'll get an advance against the total amount your provider is paying.

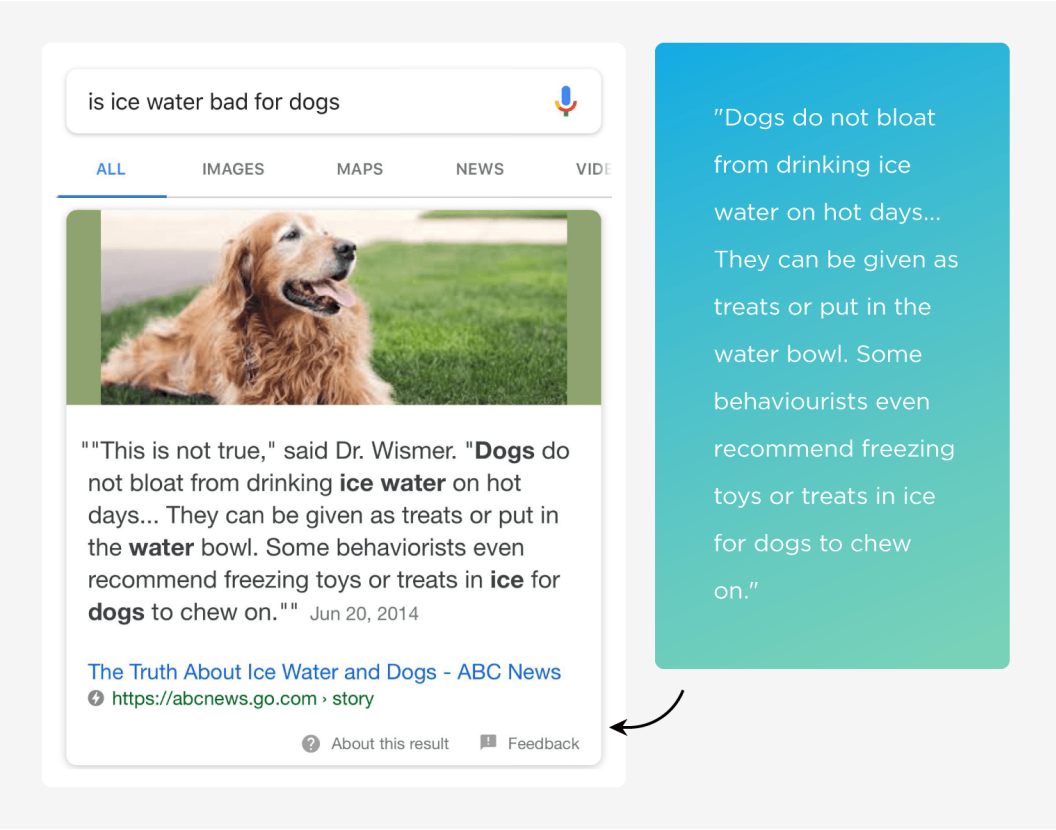
Optimize for Featured Snippets

Getting in the Featured Snippet is like a voice search cheat code.

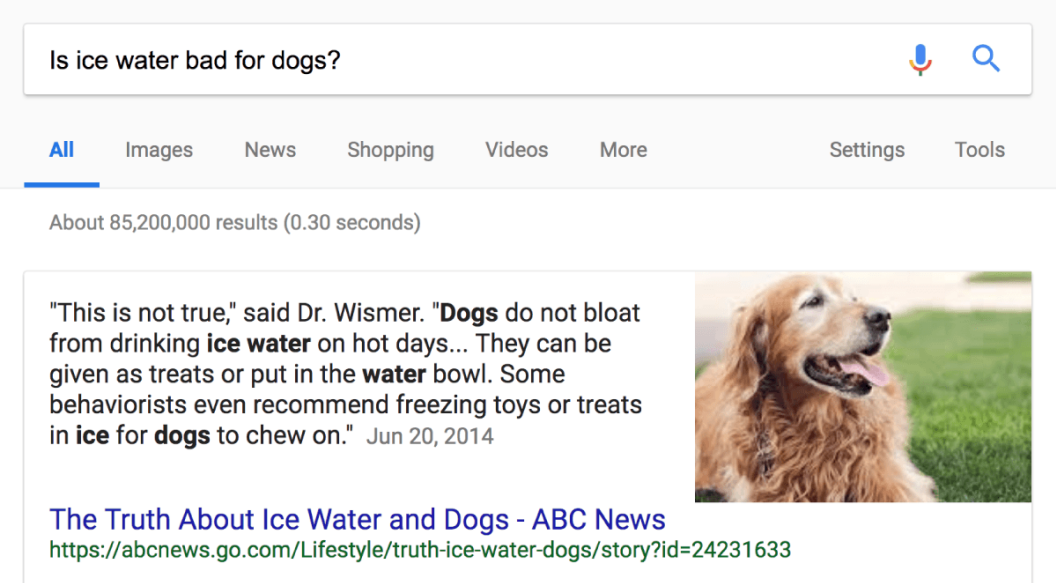
In fact, 40.7% of voice search answers come from the Featured Snippet:



For example, if you do a voice search for “Is ice water bad for dogs?” with the Google iPhone app, the answer you get is:


is ice water bad for dogs
ALL
IMAGES
MAPS
NEWS
VIDE
""This is not true," said Dr. Wismer. "Dogs do not bloat from drinking ice water on hot days... They can be given as treats or put in the water bowl. Some behaviorists even recommend freezing toys or treats in ice for dogs to chew on."" Jun 20, 2014
The Truth About Ice Water and Dogs - ABC News
https://abcnews.go.com › story
About this result
Feedback
"Dogs do not bloat from drinking ice water on hot days... They can be given as treats or put in the water bowl. Some behaviourists even recommend freezing toys or treats in ice for dogs to chew on."

And if you look at the search results, you can see that Google just read the Featured Snippet result.


Is ice water bad for dogs?
All
Images
News
Shopping
Videos
More
Settings
Tools
About 85,200,000 results (0.30 seconds)
"This is not true," said Dr. Wismer. "Dogs do not bloat from drinking ice water on hot days... They can be given as treats or put in the water bowl. Some behaviorists even recommend freezing toys or treats in ice for dogs to chew on." Jun 20, 2014
The Truth About Ice Water and Dogs - ABC News
https://abcnews.go.com/Lifestyle/truth-ice-water-dogs/story?id=24231633

And keep this in mind:

Getting in the Featured Snippet is even more important for Google Home and Alexa search results.

Why?

These devices only give you ONE answer.

So if you don't rank in Featured Snippets, you're going to be invisible on those devices.

Write Content With Natural Language

Voice searches are more natural and less robotic than keyboard searches.

And you want to write your content the same way. That way, when someone searches for...

> How do you direct message someone on instagram?

...Google will find a “match” in your content:

> So, you're probably wondering: how do you direct message someone on Instagram?

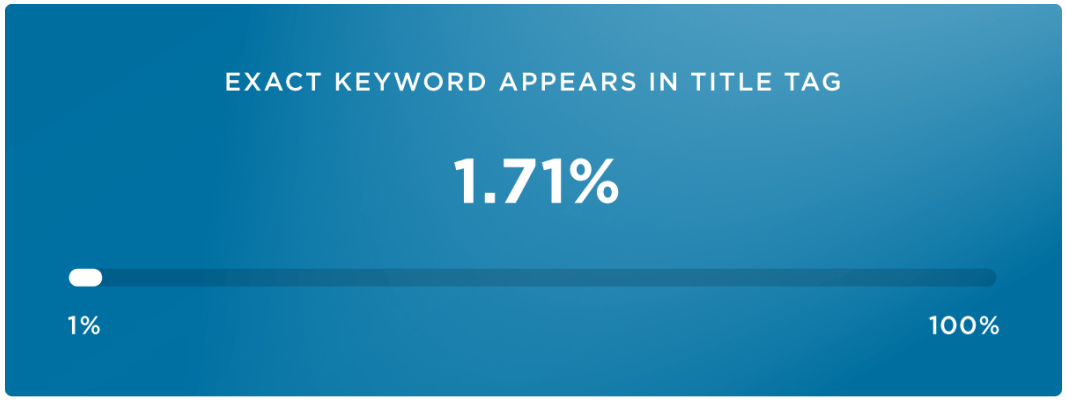
(A match that wouldn’t happen if you used a robotic phrase like: “how to dm on Instagram”)

Embed Long Tail Keywords Into Long Form Content

Yes, voice searches are significantly longer than keyboard searches.

But that doesn't mean you want to create 1000 pages optimized around 1000 different voice search terms.

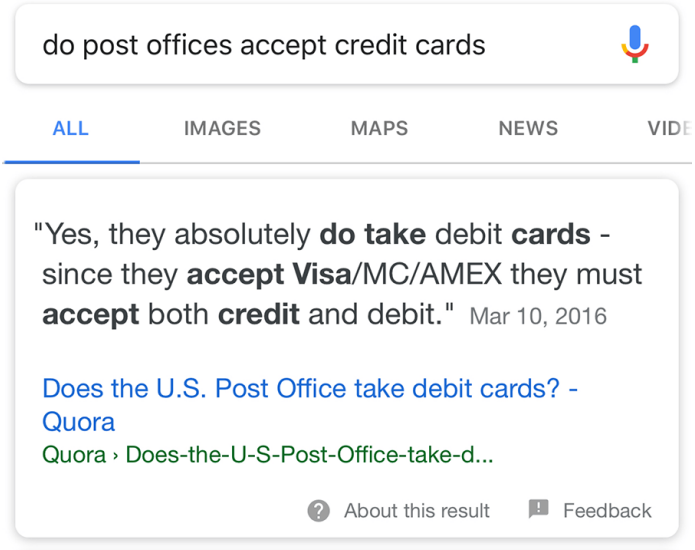
In fact, one of the most surprising findings from our voice search ranking factors study was that less than 2% of all voice search results had the exact keyword in their title tag:



Instead, Google will pull an answer from a page...

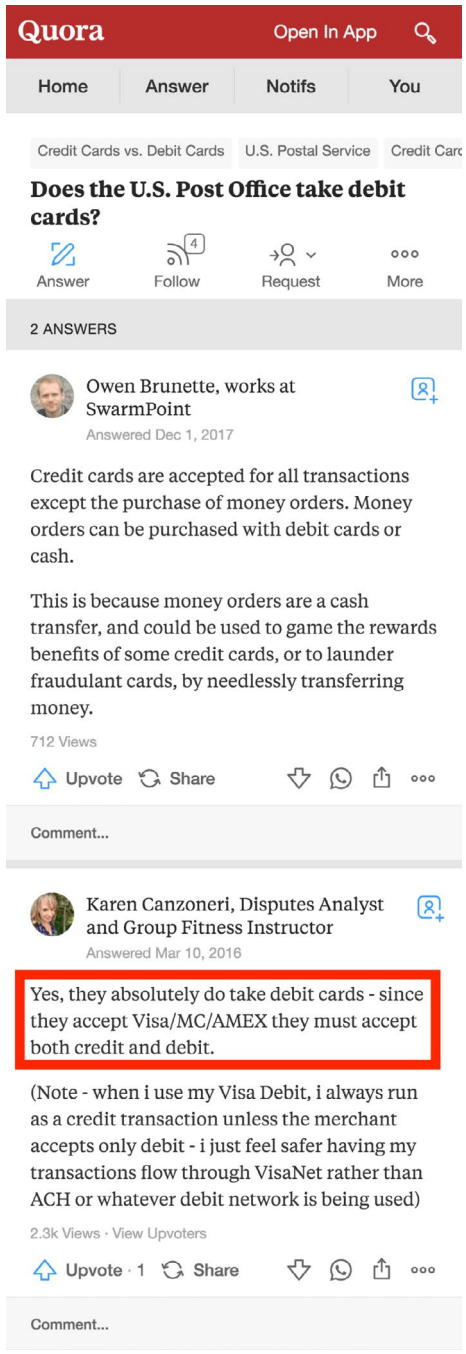
...even if that answer makes up a small section of the content.

For example, I just did a voice search for “do post offices accept credit cards”.


do post offices accept credit cards
ALL
IMAGES
MAPS
NEWS
VIDE
"Yes, they absolutely do take debit cards - since they accept Visa/MC/AMEX they must accept both credit and debit." Mar 10, 2016
Does the U.S. Post Office take debit cards? - Quora
Quora › Does-the-U-S-Post-Office-take-d...
About this result
Feedback

And the result came from a page that only answered that question halfway down the page:

But because the answer was short and sweet, Google decided that it was the best result for that query.


Quora
Open In App
Home
Answer
Notifs
You
Credit Cards vs. Debit Cards
U.S. Postal Service
Does the U.S. Post Office take debit cards?
Answer
Follow
Request
More
2 ANSWERS
Owen Brunette, works at SwarmPoint
Answered Dec 1, 2017
Credit cards are accepted for all transactions except the purchase of money orders. Money orders can be purchased with debit cards or cash.
This is because money orders are a cash transfer, and could be used to game the rewards benefits of some credit cards, or to launder fraudulant cards, by needlessly transferring money.
712 Views
Upvote
Share
Comment...
Karen Canzoneri, Disputes Analyst and Group Fitness Instructor
Answered Mar 10, 2016
Yes, they absolutely do take debit cards - since they accept Visa/MC/AMEX they must accept both credit and debit.
(Note - when i use my Visa Debit, i always run as a credit transaction unless the merchant accepts only debit - i just feel safer having my transactions flow through VisaNet rather than ACH or whatever debit network is being used)
2.3k Views · View Upvoters
Upvote · 1
Share
Comment...

Bottom line?

Embed lots of long tail keywords in your content.

When you do, your single page can rank for lots of different voice search queries.

Chapter 5

Voice Search SEO Case Studies

This chapter is all about teaching you advanced voice search SEO tips and strategies.

So if you're going "all in" in voice search, you'll love the actionable advice in this chapter.

Let's get started.

Include “Filler” Words in Question Keywords

You already learned that question keywords are on the rise. (Mostly driven by an increase in voice search)

And when you optimize for questions, make sure to include “filler words”.

What are **the** health benefits **of the** Paleo diet?

Where can **I** find Paleo diet recipes online?

Why should **I** eat Paleo?

How often can **I** eat grains **on the** Paleo diet?

When should **I** eat meals **on the** Paleo diet?

What’s **the** best way **to** start with **the** Paleo diet?

Why? Well, Bing’s Purna Virji states that:

The more matches you have, the more likely your ad will show on a voice search that includes words like “a” and “me” and “for.”

Very cool.

Write for a 9th Grade Reading Level (Or Below)

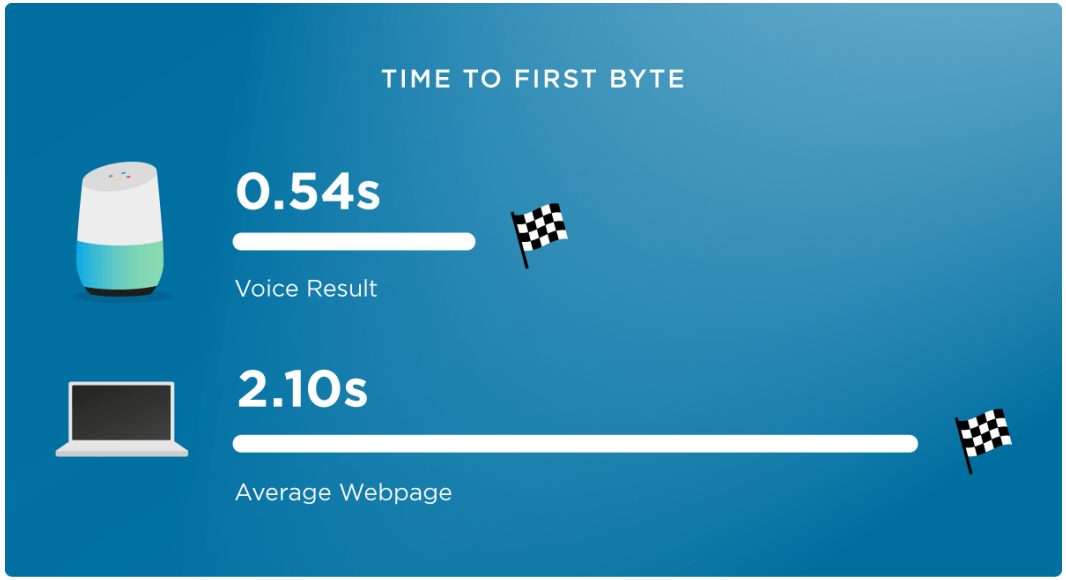
The average voice search result is written at a 9th grade reading level.

Which means you want to AVOID jargon and fancy words in your content.

(To be honest, you should avoid this stuff anyway. But it's nice to know that clear writing also helps your voice search rankings)

Improve Your Sitespeed

The loading speed of a voice search result is 3.8x faster than your average website.



Again, you want to have a fast loading site anyway.

(Especially considering that Google's Speed Update is now live)

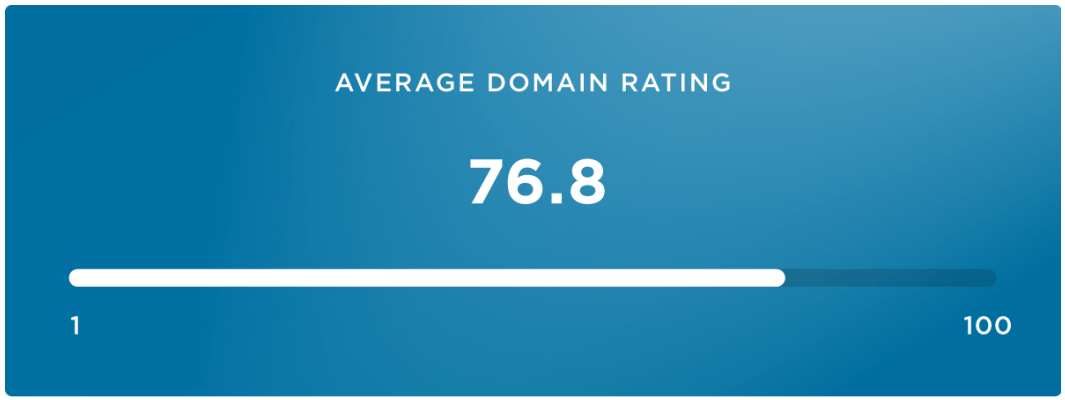
Which leads us to...

Beef Up Your Domain Authority

Did you know that sites with lots of links rank more often in voice search?

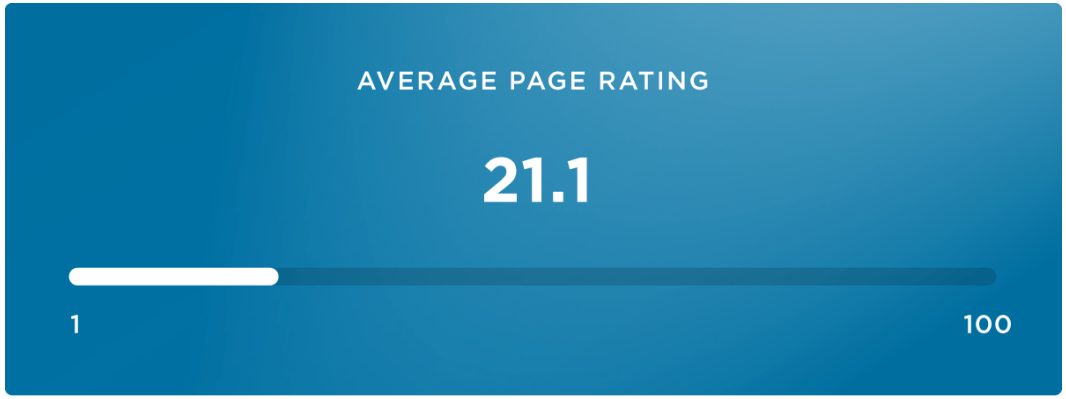
It's true.

In fact, the average Ahrefs Domain Rating of a voice search result is nearly 77.



(Which is high)

And unlike traditional SEO, the authority of the page doesn't seem to be an important voice search ranking signal.



This data is from our voice search correlation study. So it's impossible to know exactly what's going on using our data alone.

But my theory is this:

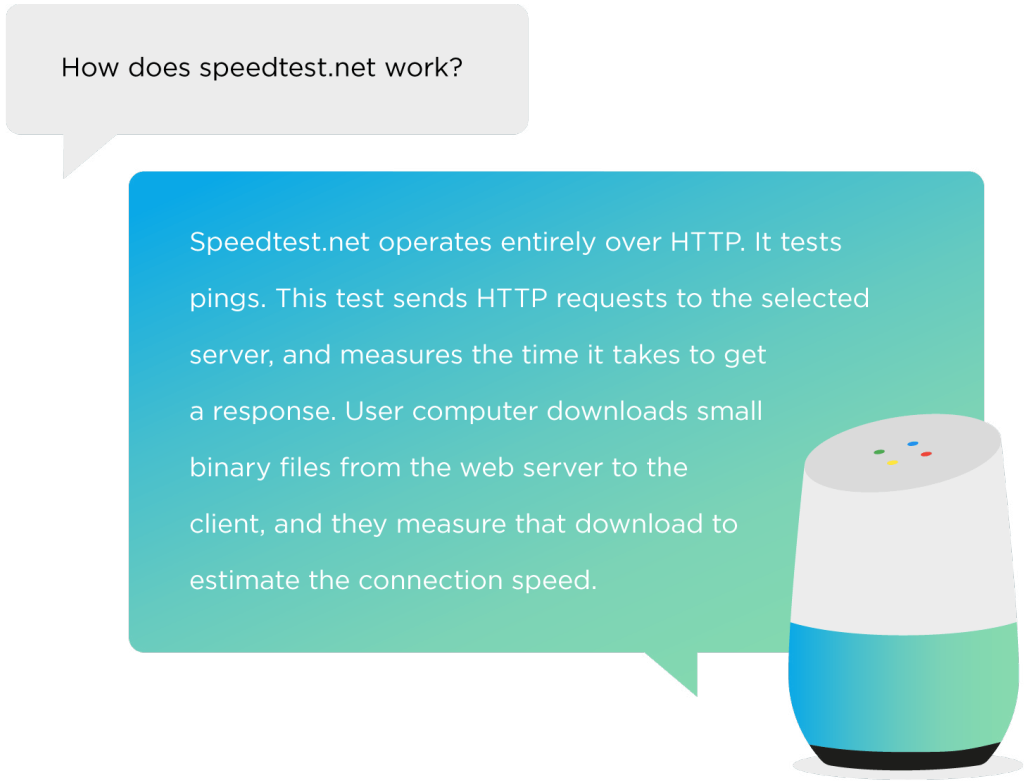
Many voice search "results" are actually just a single result.

And Google needs to know that they're giving you an answer from a trusted source.

(In other words, a domain with lots of trust and authority).

So they lean on domain authority over page authority.

For example, here's a Google Home voice search:


How does speedtest.net work?
Speedtest.net operates entirely over HTTP. It tests pings. This test sends HTTP requests to the selected server, and measures the time it takes to get a response. User computer downloads small binary files from the web server to the client, and they measure that download to estimate the connection speed.

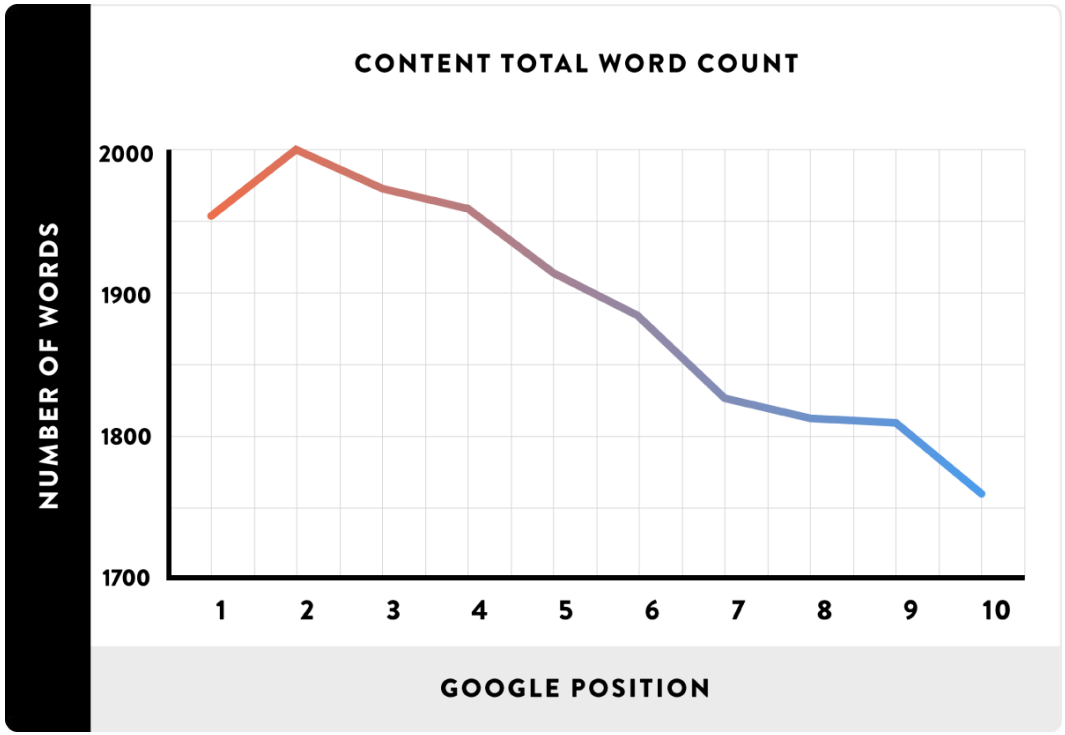
The answer comes from an authoritative domain (speedtest.net). But the page itself has a pretty low Page Authority (13).

The bottom line is this:
If you want to rank in voice search, focus on building up your Domain Authority.

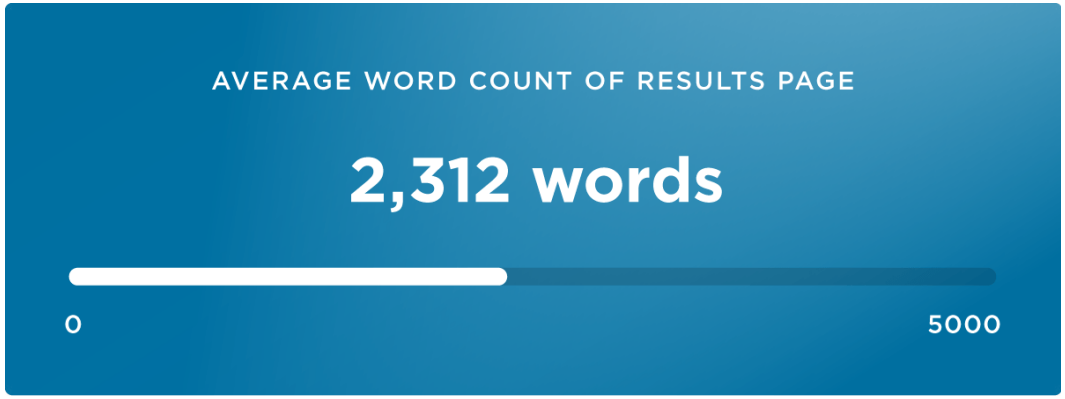
When you do, Google will want to use your site as source... even from pages on your site that don't have a ton of links.

Longer Content=More Voice Search Traffic

You might have heard that the average word count of a first page Google result is approximately 1900 words:



But what you may not know is that voice search result pages tend to be even longer (2300 words).



To be clear:

I don’t think Google’s voice algo has a sweet spot for long content.

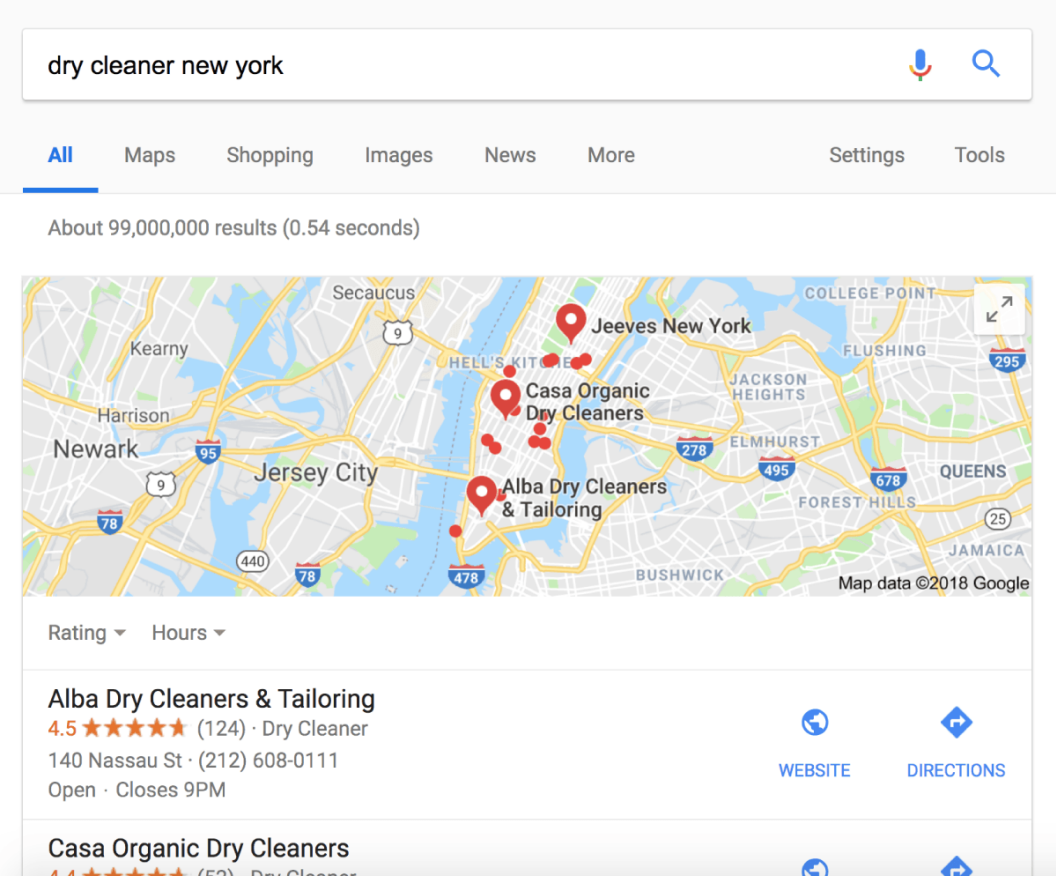
Instead, this is just a numbers game:

A page with lots of content is more likely to “match” a voice search query.

Optimize for "___Near Me" Searches

Back in the day, "local" searches meant city and state.

So if you wanted to find a dry cleaner in New York, you'd Google something like this:



Over the last few years local searches have gone from “city”... to “block”.

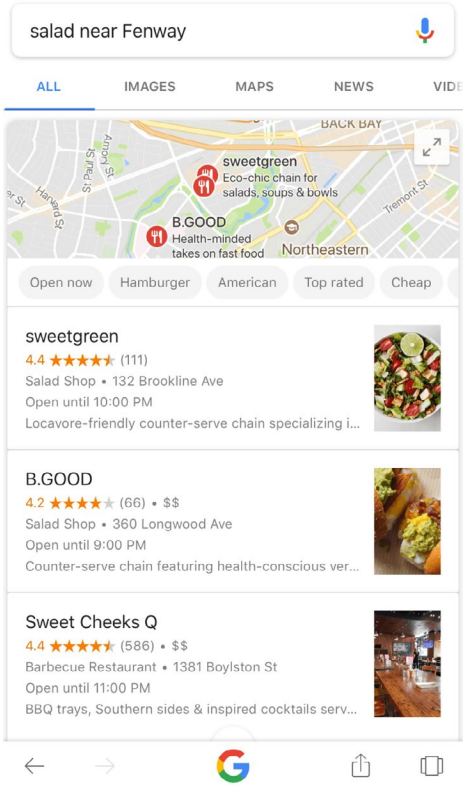
(Mostly thanks to an explosion in “___ Near Me” searches)

So if you run a local business, you NEED to optimize around terms that voice searchers use.

For example, the other day I was looking for a salad place. And I happen to be near Fenway Park.

So I used the Google app to search for: “salad near Fenway”.

And I got a list of salad places near Fenway Park:

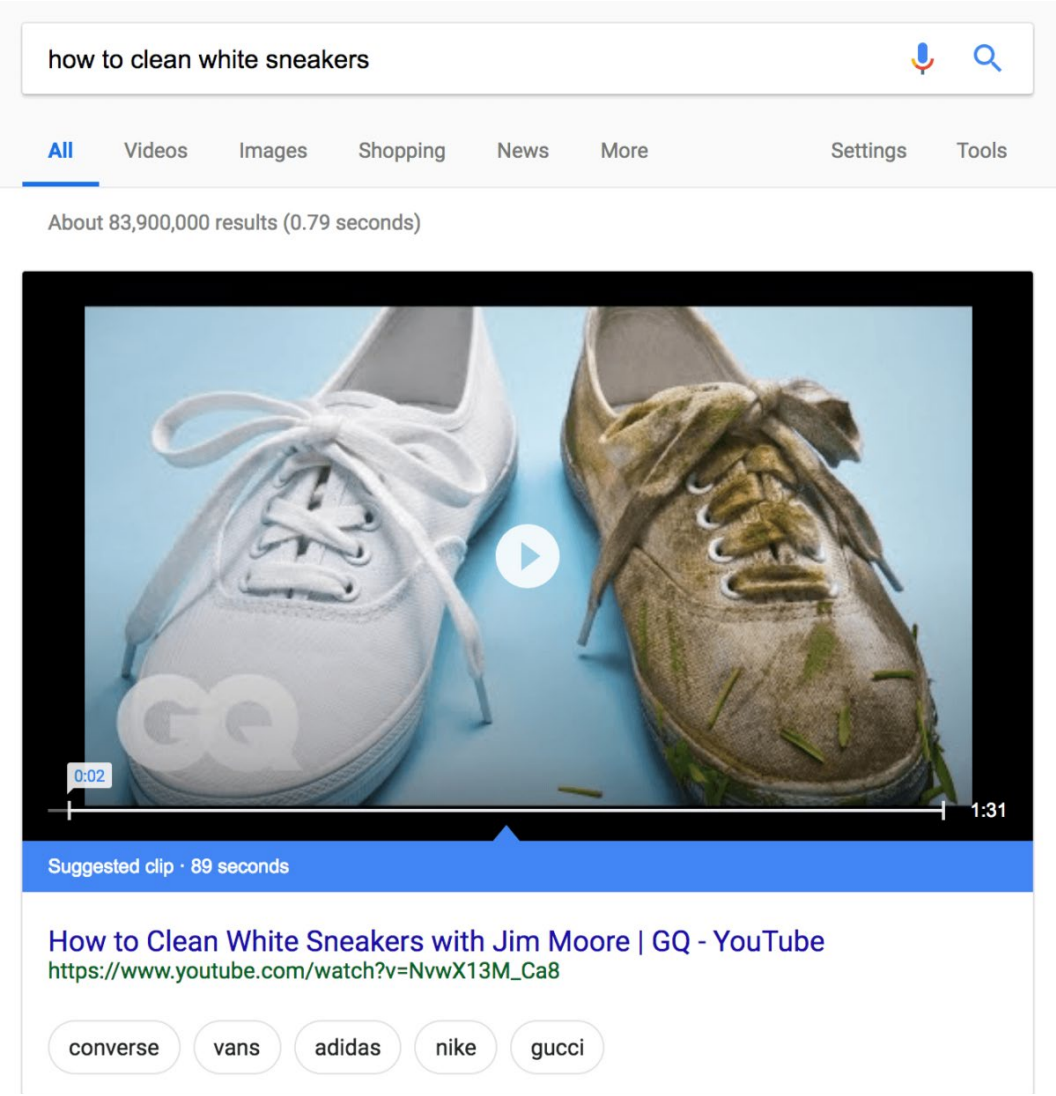


Businesses that optimize for “near Fenway” or “in the Fenway area” are going to rank best for hyper-local searches like this.

(Which means more customers walking through the door)

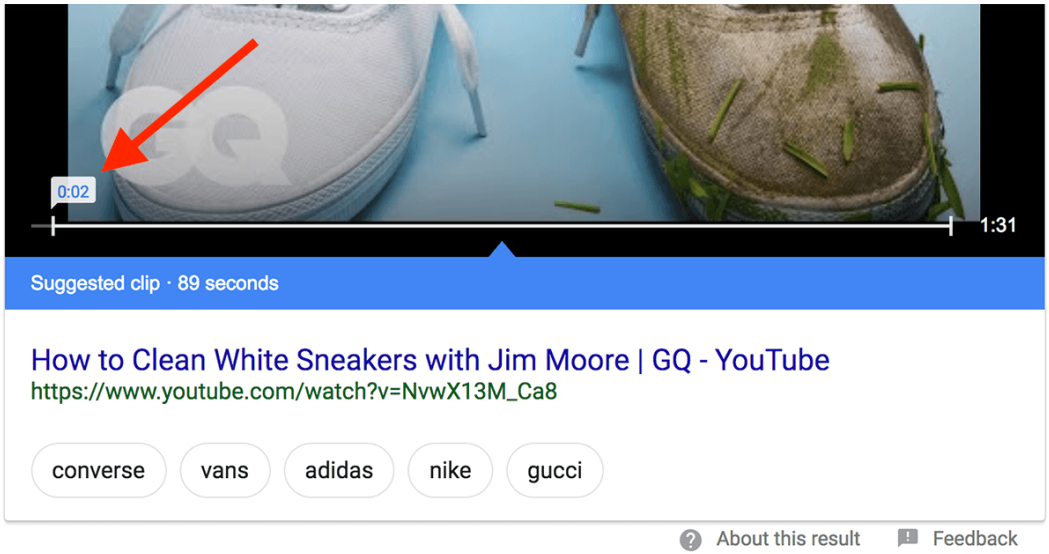
Rank Videos in the Search Results

You may have noticed that Google recently rolled out what I call "Video Featured Snippets".



As you can see, it's a video result.

But instead of a link to a YouTube video, Google pulls out the section of the video that's relevant to your search.



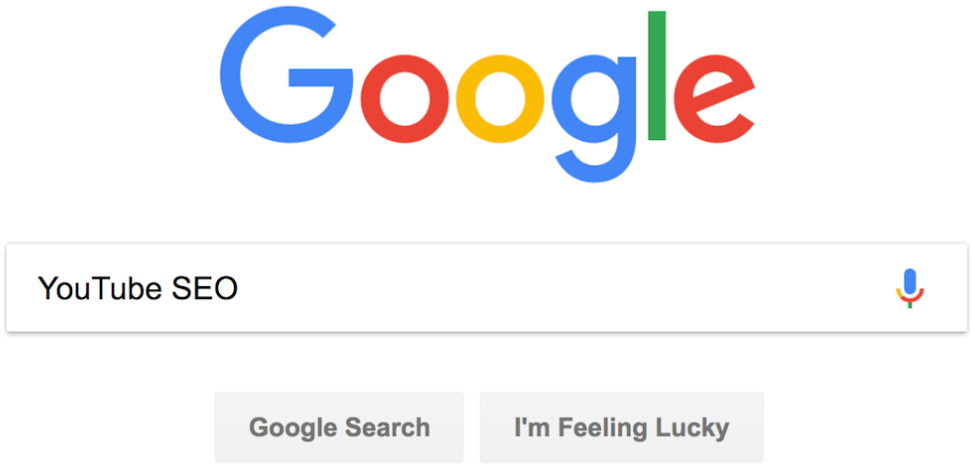
And from my informal testing (and data from Bing), these types of video results tend to pop up more often for natural language queries.

(The type of natural language queries that people use in voice searches)

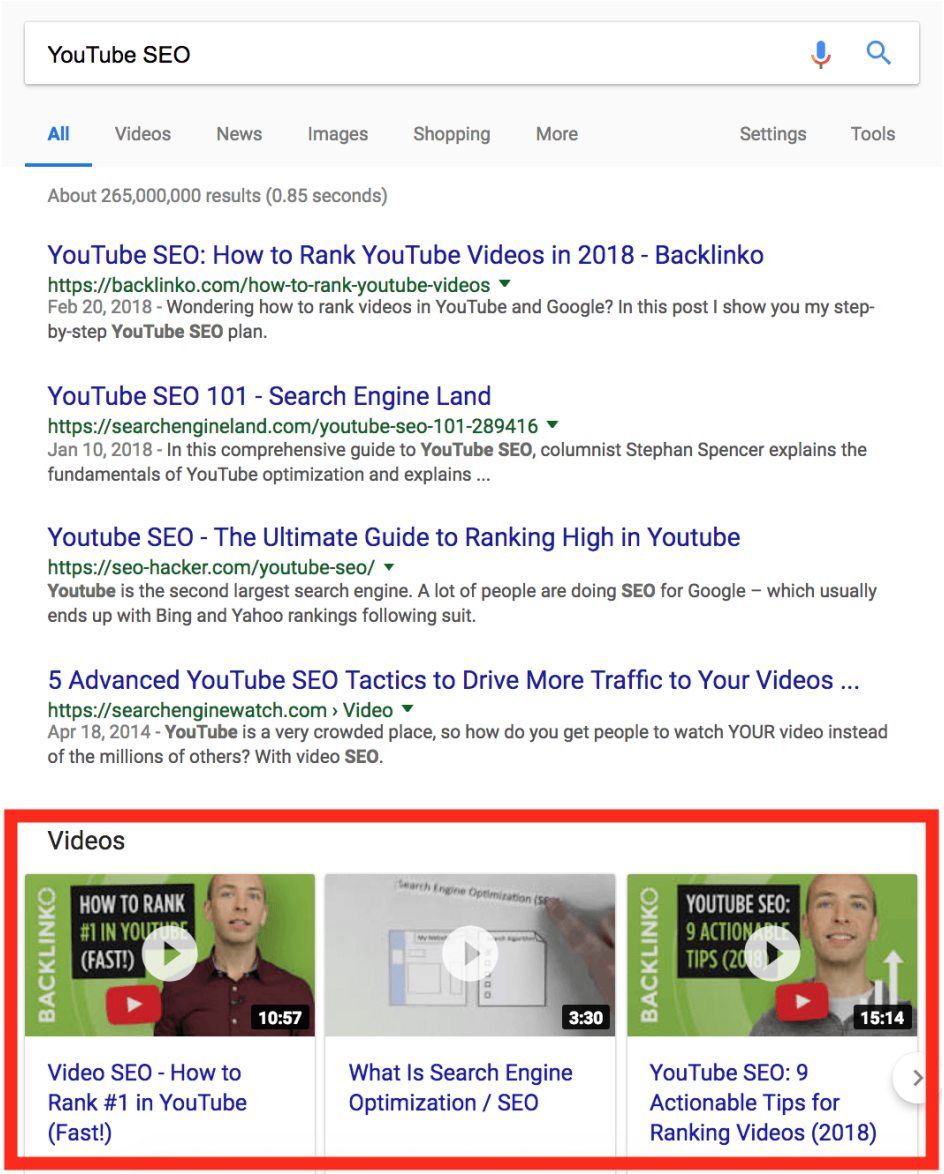
Here's a perfect example of what I mean...

Let's say that you want to rank your videos in YouTube. So you decide to search for some video SEO advice.

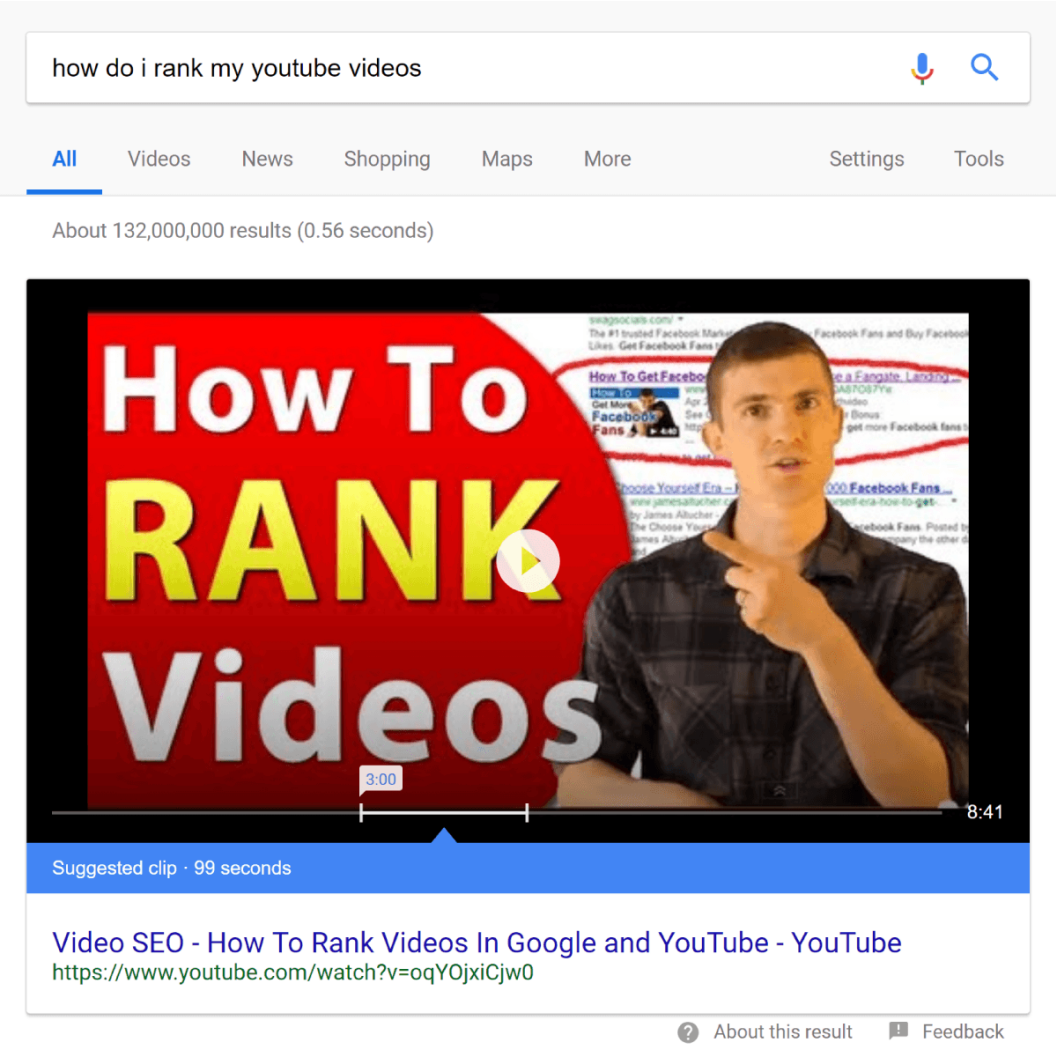
If you use a keyboard, you're probably going to search for something like:



Sure, there are videos in the search results. But they rank in the 5th spot.


YouTube SEO
All
Videos
News
Images
Shopping
More
Settings
Tools
About 265,000,000 results (0.85 seconds)
YouTube SEO: How to Rank YouTube Videos in 2018 - Backlinko
https://backlinko.com/how-to-rank-youtube-videos
Feb 20, 2018 - Wondering how to rank videos in YouTube and Google? In this post I show you my step-by-step YouTube SEO plan.
YouTube SEO 101 - Search Engine Land
https://searchengineland.com/youtube-seo-101-289416
Jan 10, 2018 - In this comprehensive guide to YouTube SEO, columnist Stephan Spencer explains the fundamentals of YouTube optimization and explains ...
Youtube SEO - The Ultimate Guide to Ranking High in Youtube
https://seo-hacker.com/youtube-seo/
Youtube is the second largest search engine. A lot of people are doing SEO for Google – which usually ends up with Bing and Yahoo rankings following suit.
5 Advanced YouTube SEO Tactics to Drive More Traffic to Your Videos ...
https://searchenginewatch.com › Video
Apr 18, 2014 - YouTube is a very crowded place, so how do you get people to watch YOUR video instead of the millions of others? With video SEO.
Videos
HOW TO RANK #1 IN YOUTUBE (FAST!)
BACKLINKO
10:57
3:30
YOUTUBE SEO: 9 ACTIONABLE TIPS (2018)
BACKLINKO
15:14
Video SEO - How to Rank #1 in YouTube (Fast!)
What Is Search Engine Optimization / SEO
YouTube SEO: 9 Actionable Tips for Ranking Videos (2018)

Look what happens when you search for the same thing using the natural language keyword: “how do I rank my YouTube videos”



You get a Video Featured Snippet.

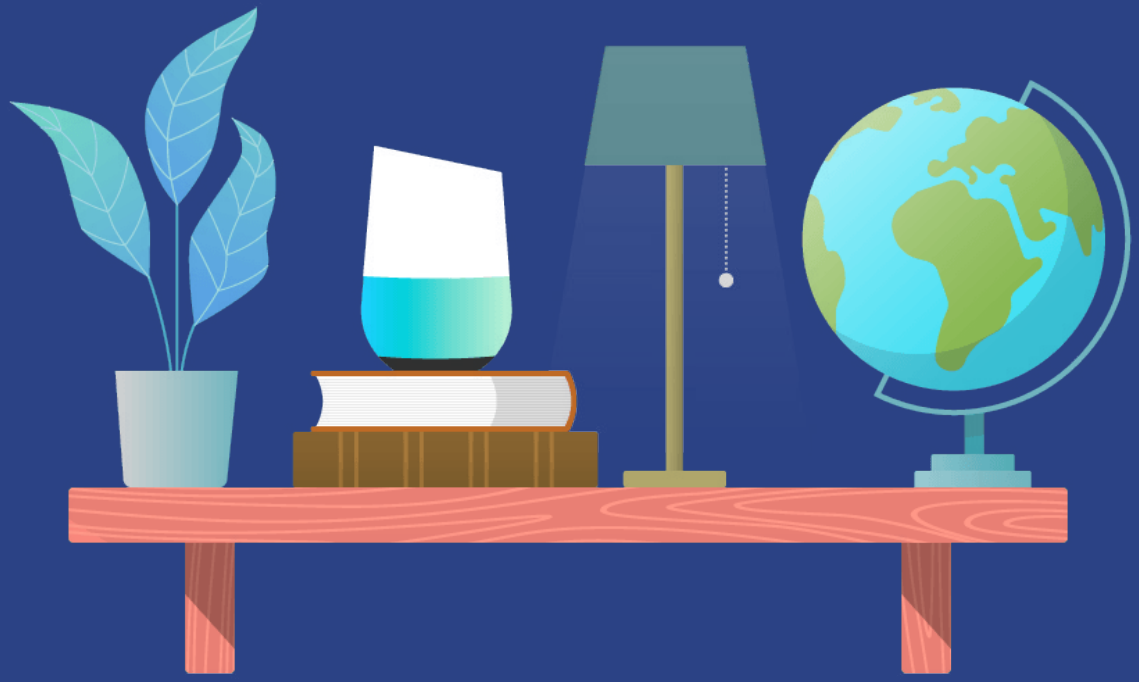
The takeaway is this:

Video is a BIG part of Google's strategy for answering voice search queries.

So if you want to get your content in front of voice searchers, you need rank your videos in Google.

Chapter 6

Voice Search SEO Case Studies



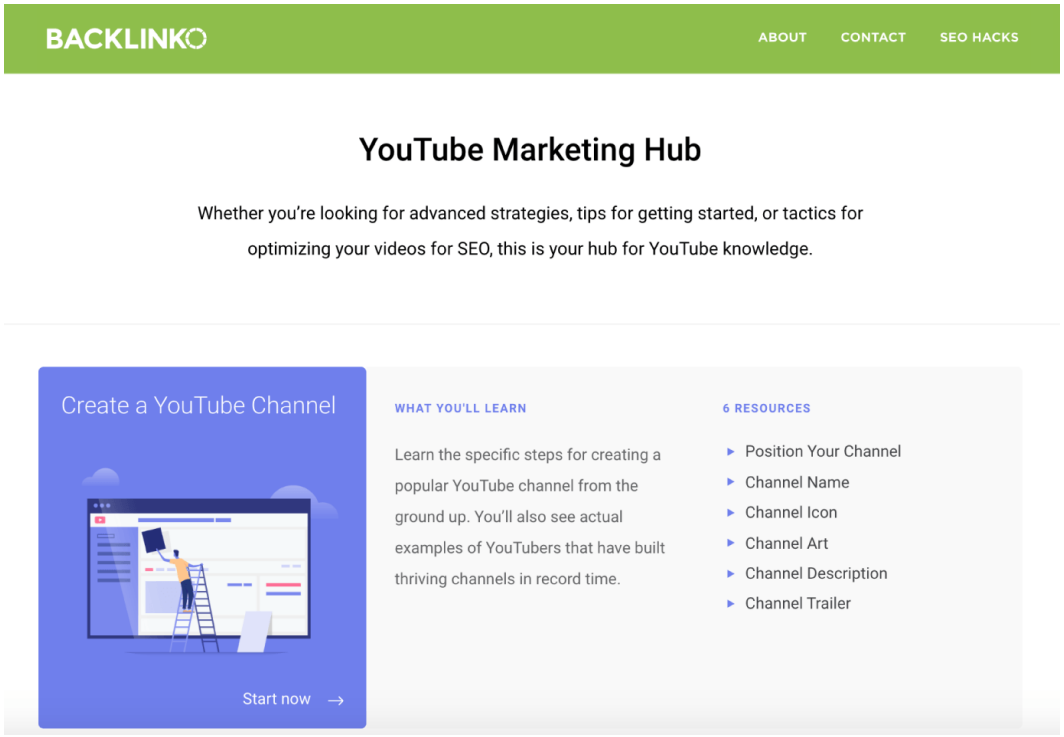
In this chapter you're going to see real-life examples of voice search results.

I'll also break each page down so you can see why it's ranking so well.

That way, you can apply these strategies to your site.

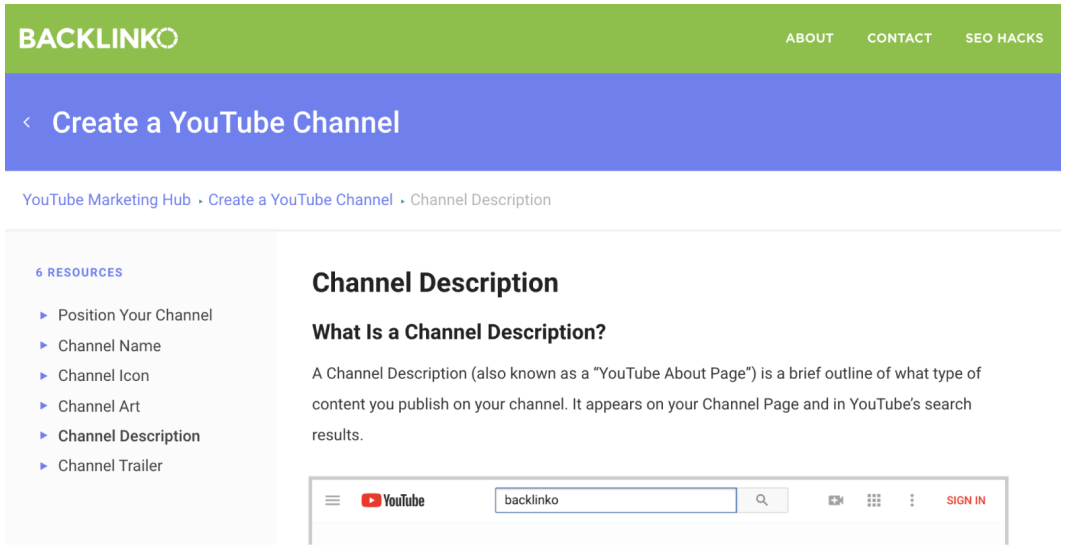
Case Study #1: “What are Channel Keywords?”

Earlier this year I launched The YouTube Marketing Hub.


BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
YouTube Marketing Hub
Whether you're looking for advanced strategies, tips for getting started, or tactics for optimizing your videos for SEO, this is your hub for YouTube knowledge.
Create a YouTube Channel
Start now
WHAT YOU'LL LEARN
Learn the specific steps for creating a popular YouTube channel from the ground up. You'll also see actual examples of YouTubers that have built thriving channels in record time.
6 RESOURCES
Position Your Channel
Channel Name
Channel Icon
Channel Art
Channel Description
Channel Trailer

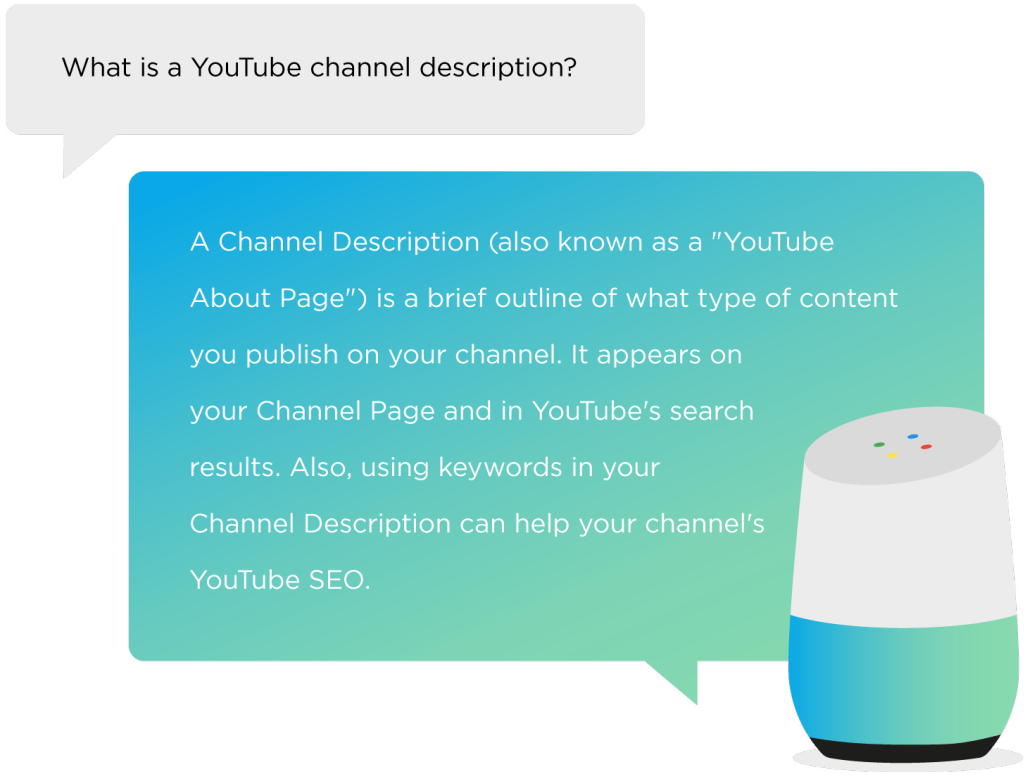
And when I wrote the content for the hub, I made sure to optimize it for voice search.

Specifically, I included a mini FAQ section at the top of almost every page:


BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
Create a YouTube Channel
YouTube Marketing Hub ▸ Create a YouTube Channel ▸ Channel Description
6 RESOURCES
Position Your Channel
Channel Name
Channel Icon
Channel Art
Channel Description
Channel Trailer
Channel Description
What Is a Channel Description?
A Channel Description (also known as a "YouTube About Page") is a brief outline of what type of content you publish on your channel. It appears on your Channel Page and in YouTube's search results.
YouTube
backlinko
SIGN IN

And it worked!

When you do a voice search for “What is a YouTube channel description?”, you get this answer from Google:


What is a YouTube channel description?
A Channel Description (also known as a "YouTube About Page") is a brief outline of what type of content you publish on your channel. It appears on your Channel Page and in YouTube's search results. Also, using keywords in your Channel Description can help your channel's YouTube SEO.

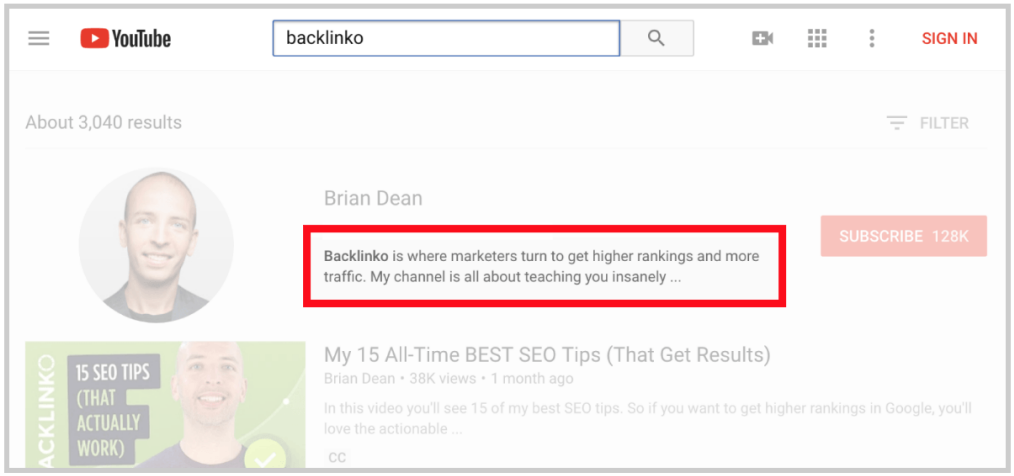
Let's break down some of the factors that went into this result:

First, the answer was part of a mini FAQ section. As I showed you earlier, Google loves pulling voice search answers from FAQ pages.

Channel Description

What Is a Channel Description?

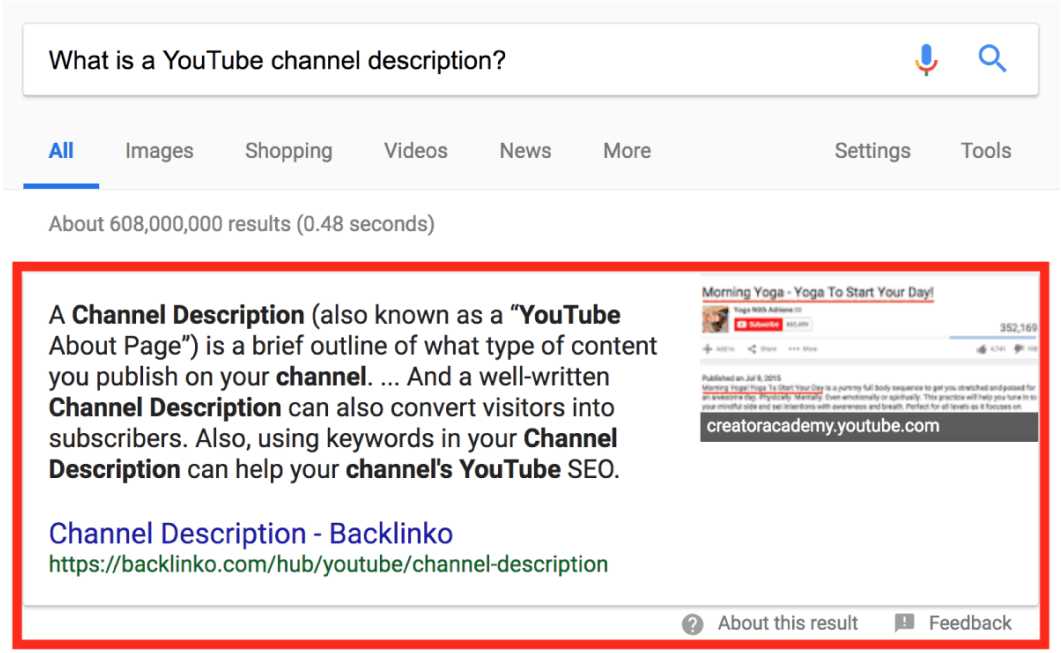
A Channel Description (also known as a "YouTube About Page") is a brief outline of what type of content you publish on your channel. It appears on your Channel Page and in YouTube's search results.


YouTube
backlinko
SIGN IN
About 3,040 results
FILTER
Brian Dean
Backlinko is where marketers turn to get higher rankings and more traffic. My channel is all about teaching you insanely ...
SUBSCRIBE 128K
15 SEO TIPS (THAT ACTUALLY WORK)
My 15 All-Time BEST SEO Tips (That Get Results)
Brian Dean • 38K views • 1 month ago
In this video you'll see 15 of my best SEO tips. So if you want to get higher rankings in Google, you'll love the actionable ...
CC

Why Is Your Channel Description Important?

Your Channel Description is a way for visitors to learn more about you and the type of videos you create. And a well-written Channel Description can also convert visitors into subscribers. Also, using keywords in your Channel Description can help your channel's YouTube SEO.

Next, the result shows up in the Featured Snippet spot:


What is a YouTube channel description?
All
Images
Shopping
Videos
News
More
Settings
Tools
About 608,000,000 results (0.48 seconds)
A Channel Description (also known as a "YouTube About Page") is a brief outline of what type of content you publish on your channel. ... And a well-written Channel Description can also convert visitors into subscribers. Also, using keywords in your Channel Description can help your channel's YouTube SEO.
Channel Description - Backlinko
https://backlinko.com/hub/youtube/channel-description
Morning Yoga - Yoga To Start Your Day!
352,169
creatoracademy.youtube.com
About this result
Feedback

Third, the reading level of my answer is 9th grade, which is in-line with most other voice search results.

Finally, Backlinko's Domain Rating is 85. That's higher than the voice search average of 77.

SEO Training and Link Building Strategies – Backlinko

backlinko.com ▾

Again, the authority of the page doesn't seem to be super important for voice search SEO.

(That page's authority is only 12)

Channel Description

backlinko.com/hub/youtube/channel-description ▾

Let's look at another example...

Case Study #2: “What’s the Best Way to Peel Garlic?”

The answer to this one comes from Lifehacker:

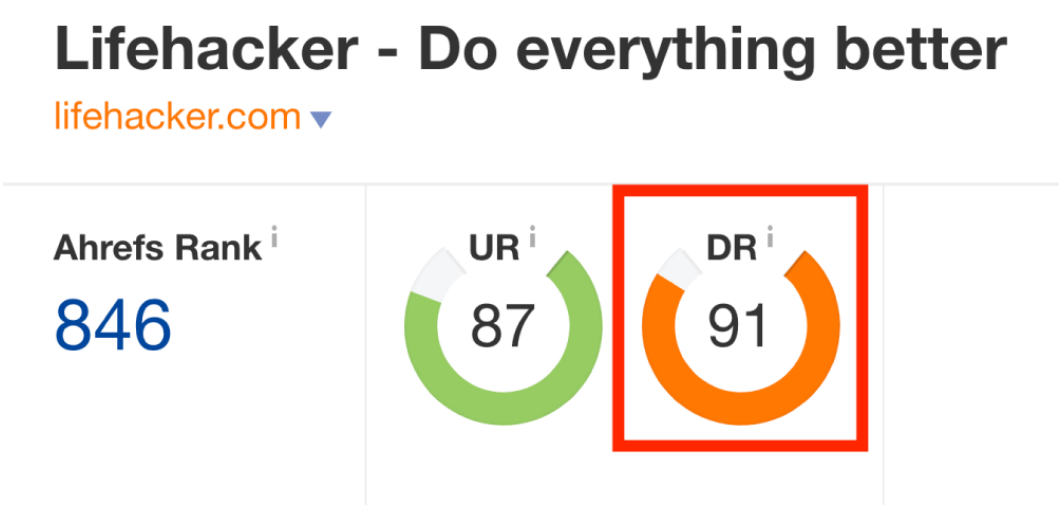
lifehacker
VIDEO SKILLET TWO CENTS VITALS OFFSPRING THE UPGRADE APP DIRECTORY HOW I WORK
What's the Fastest Way to Peel a Bunch of Garlic?
Tessa Miller
6/14/13 5:00pm • Filed to: CROWDHACKER
87.6K 36 2

This is one of the cases where Google still gives you 10 blue links.

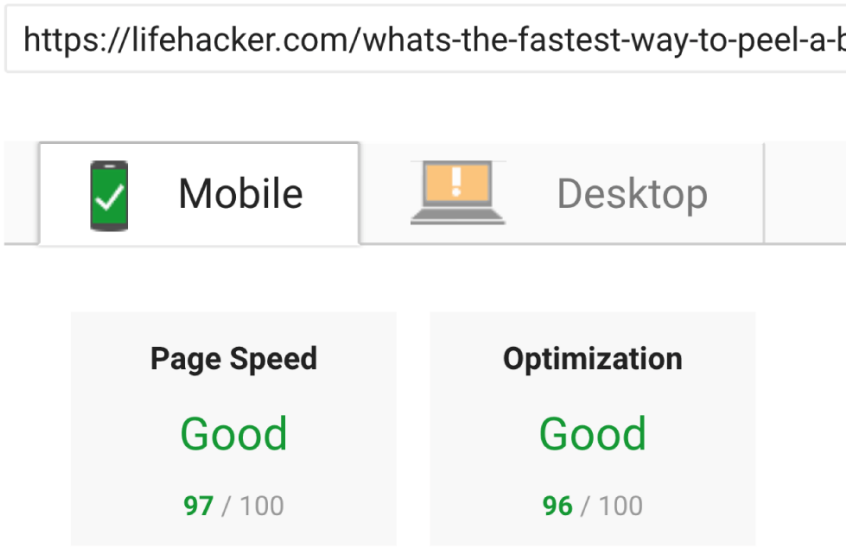
But unlike a traditional set of search results, Google points you to a specific result by saying: “Here’s information from Lifehacker:”

So what helped this page rank for this voice search keyword?

First off, Lifehacker is a super authoritative site (Domain Rating of 91).

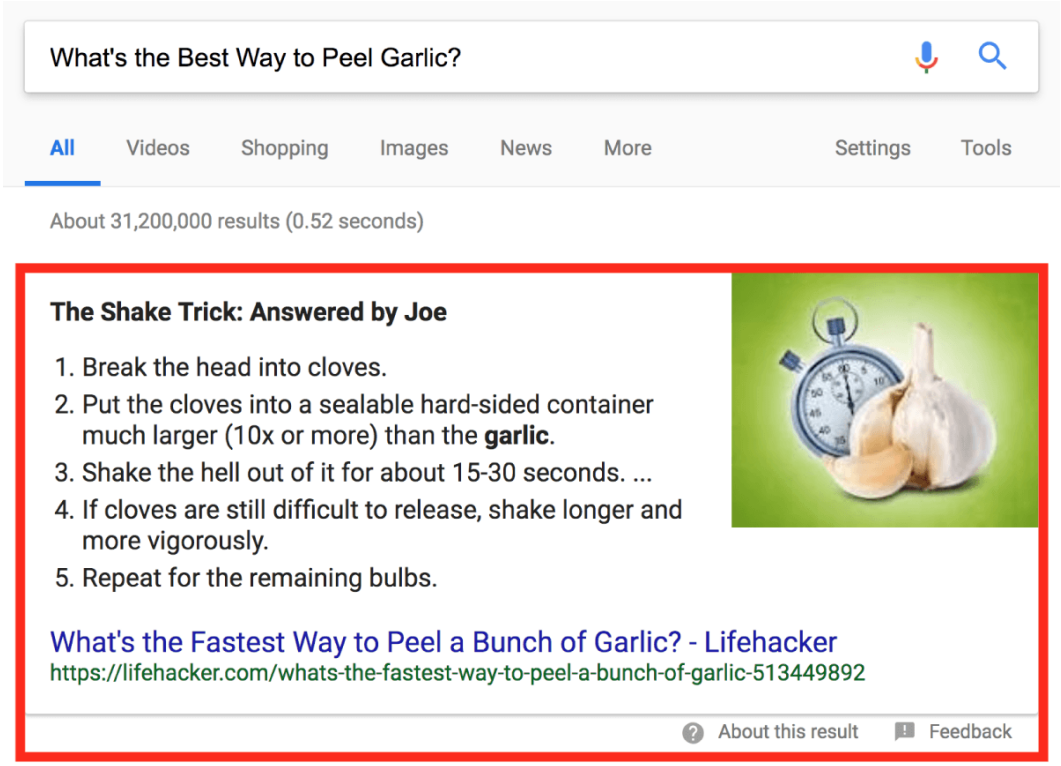


The page also loads lightning fast (it has a 97/100 mobile speed score from Google PageSpeed Insights).



The answer is also written in a way that's easy to understand (it's written at a 7th grade reading level).

Last up, the answer is in the Featured Snippet spot, which increases the odds of ranking in voice search:


What's the Best Way to Peel Garlic?
All
Videos
Shopping
Images
News
More
Settings
Tools
About 31,200,000 results (0.52 seconds)
The Shake Trick: Answered by Joe
1. Break the head into cloves.
2. Put the cloves into a sealable hard-sided container much larger (10x or more) than the garlic.
3. Shake the hell out of it for about 15-30 seconds. ...
4. If cloves are still difficult to release, shake longer and more vigorously.
5. Repeat for the remaining bulbs.
What's the Fastest Way to Peel a Bunch of Garlic? - Lifehacker
https://lifehacker.com/whats-the-fastest-way-to-peel-a-bunch-of-garlic-513449892
About this result
Feedback

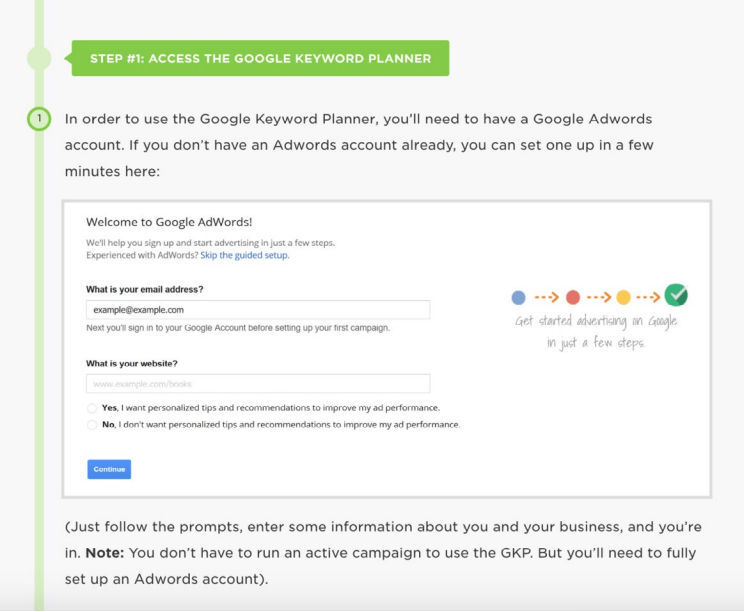
Let's wrap things up with one final mini case study...

Case Study #3: “How do you access the Google Keyword Planner?”

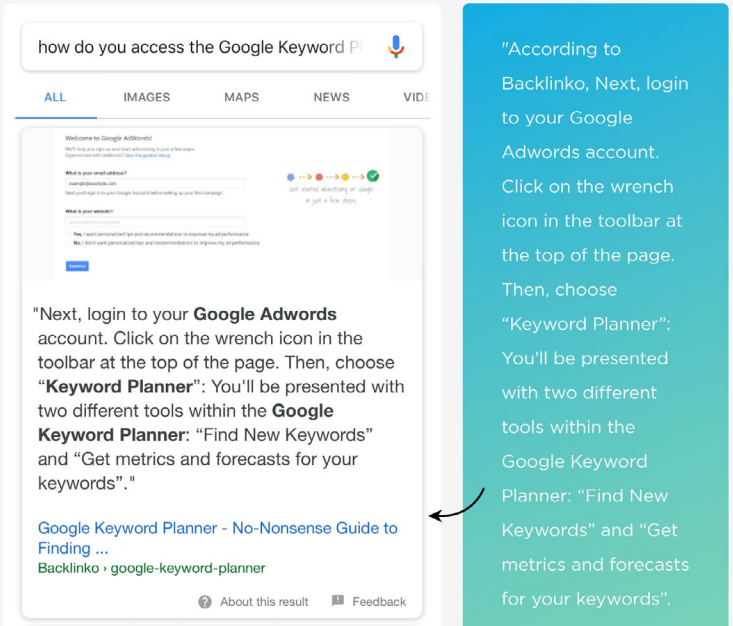
So I recently updated my guide to getting the most out of The Google Keyword Planner.

BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
743
shares
CHAPTER 2:
How to Get The Most Out of the Google Keyword Planner
There's no way around it: without objective data, keyword research is a shot in the dark.
Fortunately, the SEO Gods have given us an awesome (free) tool that tells us almost everything we need to make informed decisions...
...decisions about which keywords are best for our business.

Specifically, I added a bunch of snippets that would work well as a Featured Snippet or as a voice search result.


STEP #1: ACCESS THE GOOGLE KEYWORD PLANNER
1
In order to use the Google Keyword Planner, you'll need to have a Google Adwords account. If you don't have an Adwords account already, you can set one up in a few minutes here:
Welcome to Google AdWords!
We'll help you sign up and start advertising in just a few steps.
Experienced with AdWords? Skip the guided setup.
What is your email address?
example@example.com
Next you'll sign in to your Google Account before setting up your first campaign.
What is your website?
Yes, I want personalized tips and recommendations to improve my ad performance.
No, I don't want personalized tips and recommendations to improve my ad performance.
Continue
Get started advertising on Google in just a few steps.
(Just follow the prompts, enter some information about you and your business, and you're in. Note: You don't have to run an active campaign to use the GKP. But you'll need to fully set up an Adwords account).

And sure enough, my page "ranks" #1 when you voice search for: "How do you access the Google Keyword Planner".

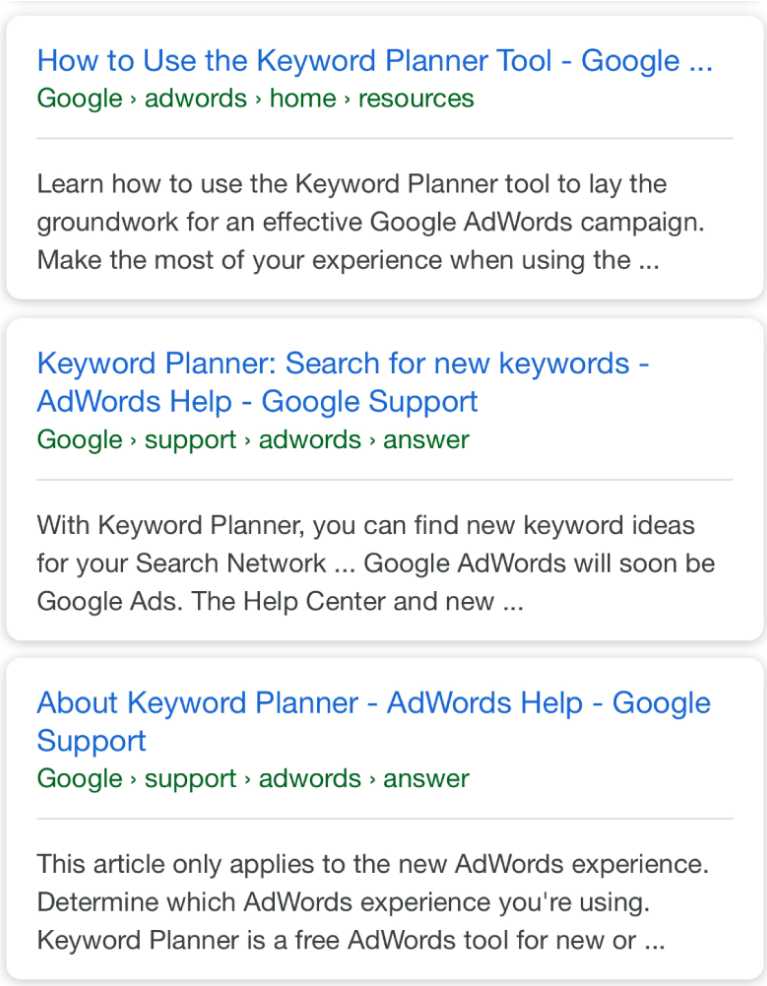

how do you access the Google Keyword P
ALL
IMAGES
MAPS
NEWS
"Next, login to your Google Adwords account. Click on the wrench icon in the toolbar at the top of the page. Then, choose "Keyword Planner": You'll be presented with two different tools within the Google Keyword Planner: "Find New Keywords" and "Get metrics and forecasts for your keywords"."
Google Keyword Planner - No-Nonsense Guide to Finding ...
Backlinko › google-keyword-planner
About this result
Feedback
"According to Backlinko, Next, login to your Google Adwords account. Click on the wrench icon in the toolbar at the top of the page. Then, choose "Keyword Planner": You'll be presented with two different tools within the Google Keyword Planner: "Find New Keywords" and "Get metrics and forecasts for your keywords".

Let's break it down:

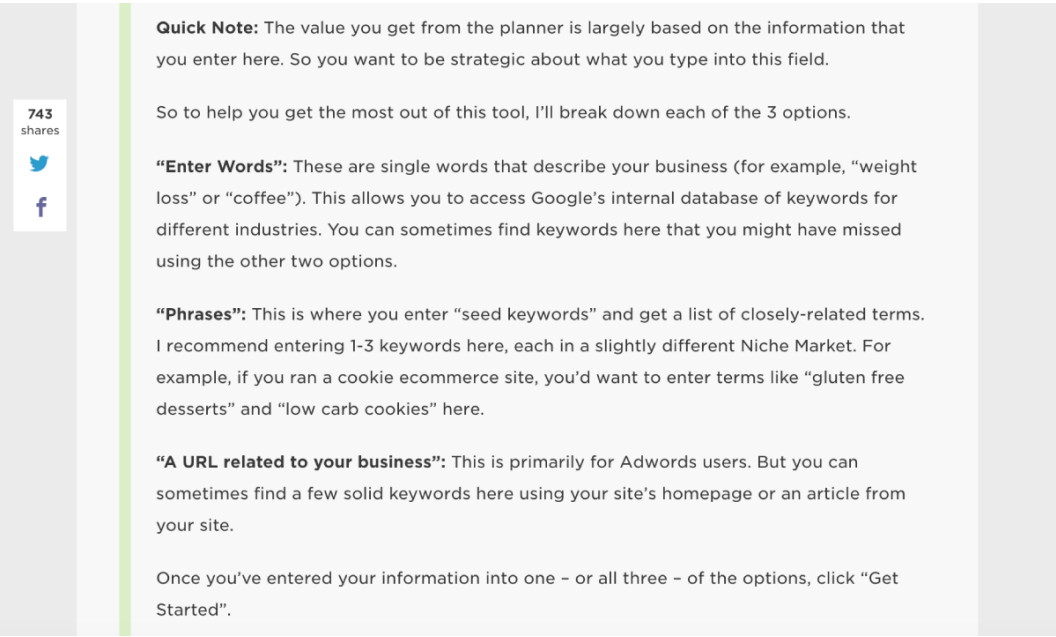
First, Backlinko's Domain Rating is 85. That definitely helps.

But links aren't nearly as important as formatting and language.

(After all, 3 of the other 10 results on the first page are from Google.com).


How to Use the Keyword Planner Tool - Google ...
Google › adwords › home › resources
Learn how to use the Keyword Planner tool to lay the groundwork for an effective Google AdWords campaign. Make the most of your experience when using the ...
Keyword Planner: Search for new keywords - AdWords Help - Google Support
Google › support › adwords › answer
With Keyword Planner, you can find new keyword ideas for your Search Network ... Google AdWords will soon be Google Ads. The Help Center and new ...
About Keyword Planner - AdWords Help - Google Support
Google › support › adwords › answer
This article only applies to the new AdWords experience. Determine which AdWords experience you're using. Keyword Planner is a free AdWords tool for new or ...

Second, even though the guide was on a technical subject, I made it easy to understand:


743
shares
Quick Note: The value you get from the planner is largely based on the information that you enter here. So you want to be strategic about what you type into this field.
So to help you get the most out of this tool, I'll break down each of the 3 options.
"Enter Words": These are single words that describe your business (for example, "weight loss" or "coffee"). This allows you to access Google's internal database of keywords for different industries. You can sometimes find keywords here that you might have missed using the other two options.
"Phrases": This is where you enter "seed keywords" and get a list of closely-related terms. I recommend entering 1-3 keywords here, each in a slightly different Niche Market. For example, if you ran a cookie ecommerce site, you'd want to enter terms like "gluten free desserts" and "low carb cookies" here.
"A URL related to your business": This is primarily for Adwords users. But you can sometimes find a few solid keywords here using your site's homepage or an article from your site.
Once you've entered your information into one – or all three – of the options, click "Get Started".

(It's exactly how I'd explain the Google Keyword Planner to my non-tech savvy mom)

In fact, my page is written at an 8th grade reading level.

Finally, the word count of my page is 2,497 words.

BACKLINKO
ABOUT
CONTACT
SEO HACKS
745
shares
CHAPTER 2:
How to Get The Most Out of the Google Keyword Planner
There's no way around it: without objective data, keyword research is a shot in the dark.
Fortunately, the SEO Gods have given us an awesome (free) tool that tells us almost everything we need to make informed decisions...
...decisions about which keywords are best for our business.
2,497 Words

The average voice search result is approximately 2,300 words. So my content is pretty close to the "ideal" length for voice search SEO.

Want more actionable SEO content like this? Then make sure to subscribe to my YouTube channel right now.

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